

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Agenda



9.30 am Monday, 7 September 2020
Via Microsoft Teams

In accordance with Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, this meeting will be held on a virtual basis. Members of the Public can view a live stream of the meeting at:

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/livemeetings>

Members of the public wanting to raise issues/make representations at the meeting can do so by emailing Allison.hill@darlington.gov.uk 24 hours before the meeting begins.

1. Introductions/ Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meetings of this Scrutiny Committee held on :
 - (a) 29 June 2020; and (Pages 1 - 2)
 - (b) 13 July 2020 (Special Meeting) (Pages 3 - 8)
4. Children and Young People and Public Health - Post-Covid-19 priorities – Presentation by Public Health Specialist
5. Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2019/20 – Report of the Director of Children and Adults Services (Pages 9 - 24)
6. Performance Indicators Quarter 4 2019/20 – Report of the Director of Children and Adults Services (Pages 25 - 52)

7. Designated Officer Annual Report –
Report of the Director of Children and Adults Services
(Pages 53 - 72)
8. Learning and Skills Annual Report –
Report of the Director of Children and Adults Services
(Pages 73 - 80)
9. Work Programme –
Report of the Managing Director
(Pages 81 - 96)
10. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this
Committee are of an urgent nature and can be discussed at this meeting
11. Questions



Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Thursday, 27 August 2020

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

Councillors Bartch, Mrs Culley, Ali, Bell, Crudass, C L B Hughes, L Hughes, Lister, Lucas, Renton and Snedker

Statutory Co-optees

Malcolm Frank and Carly Spence

Non Statutory Co-optees

Maura Regan, Tim Fisher, Nick Lindsay, Glenis Harrison, Janet Woodcock and John Armitage

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Allison Hill, Democratic Officer, Resources Group, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays email: allison.hill@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 405997

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 29 June 2020

PRESENT – Councillors Bartch, Crudass, Mrs Culley, Ali, Bell, C L B Hughes, L Hughes, Lister, Lucas, Renton and Snedker

STATUTORY CO-OPTES – None

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTES – Nick Lindsay and John Armitage

APOLOGIES – Malcolm Frank and Carly Spence

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillors Clarke and Dulston

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Jane Kochanowski (Assistant Director of Children's Services) and Tony Murphy (Head of Education and Inclusion)

CYP1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

RESOLVED – That Councillor C Hughes be appointed Chair of this Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

CYP2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

RESOLVED – That Councillor Snedker be appointed Vice Chair of this Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

CYP3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at this meeting.

CYP4 TO CONSIDER THE TIMES OF MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

RESOLVED - That meetings of this Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be held at 9.30 a.m. for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

CYP5 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2020

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 3 February 2020.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 3 February 2020 be approved as a correct record.

CYP6 WORK PROGRAMME

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) in relation to items

scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2020/21 Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas to be included in the work programme.

Members agreed that the Quad of Aims that had been received in relation to Adoptive Services be included in the work programme and also to examine how the coronavirus pandemic has affected the adoption of children.

Members discussed the impact of the pandemic on the sufficiency provision of early years and requested that this also be included in the annual report to Members scheduled for January 2021.

With regard to the Coronavirus Pandemic it was agreed that an update report on the impact of COVID-19 be presented to the Special Meeting of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee scheduled for 13 July 2020.

Members also agreed that the presentation to Scrutiny by the Regional Schools Commissioner be re-arranged as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 13 July 2020

PRESENT – Councillors C L B Hughes (Chair), Bartch, Mrs Culley, Ali, Crudass, L Hughes, Lister, Lucas, Renton and Snedker

STATUTORY CO-OPTES – Carly Spence

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTES – Nick Lindsay and John Armitage

APOLOGIES – Councillor Bell, Malcolm Frank,

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Jane Kochanowski (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Tony Murphy (Head of Education and Inclusion) and Allison Hill (Democratic Officer)

CYP7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at this meeting.

CYP8 OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Director of Children and Adults Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to update Scrutiny Members on progress within Children's Services since the last meeting with a specific focus on COVID-19 pandemic response.

The submitted report outlined how the workforce within Children's Services had adapted to home working, with some exceptions where staff were building based, and to support understanding of how services were being impacted by the crisis a workforce capacity tracking tool had been developed to support managers across the service to monitor and review service capacity on a daily basis. It was reported that staffing levels had remained at normal levels throughout the pandemic.

Legislative changes came into force on 24 April 2020 to allow for flexibilities in care planning processes for children in care and adoptive pathways through the Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, however it was reported that other than introducing virtual methods of working the Local Authority had not implemented any of the amendments and Children's Services remained operational throughout the pandemic.

It was also reported that on 30 April 2020, the Secretary of State issued a notice to be in force from 1 May to 31 May 2020 to modify the duty in Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to secure special educational provision and health care provision in accordance with Educational Health and Care (EHC) plans. This meant that local authorities and health bodies must use 'reasonable endeavors' to discharge their duties considering for each child and young person with an EHC plan and what they could reasonably provide under the circumstances. It was reported that in Darlington normal decision making processes for SEND continued throughout the COVID-19 period and the Multi-Agency Panel continued to meet virtually fortnightly.

With regard to safeguarding and assurance the Council and its partners completed RAG rating of all children and families that were open to services at the start of lockdown to ensure clarity for those who would be of most concern and prioritised visits; and each organisation carried out Covid-19 Risk Assessments to identify the most high-risk families. The individual RAG rated lists from each organisation were combined to produce two Multi-Agency templates for children who have an EHC Plan and children who have a social worker enabling the most vulnerable to be supported and safeguard children who are at risk. A multi-agency group had been established, known as the Critical Safeguarding Partnership Group (CSPG) to ensure strategic oversight across all agencies of vulnerable children and a new set of guidance was developed by partners in the early stages of lockdown.

It was reported that since the start of lockdown and the partial closure of schools on 23 March 2020, 100 per cent of schools in Darlington had remained open for vulnerable children and those with critical worker parents, compared to the national average of 61 per cent of schools being open in April 2020. All of Darlington's schools made arrangements that enabled children with a social worker to continue to attend and children and their parents were actively encouraged to do so and school attendance was monitored daily.

On 3 July 2020 average attendance at school for children with a social worker was 30 per cent which compared favourably with the last published Department for Education national attendance estimate for this cohort which was 18 per cent as of 11 June 2020. It was also reported that throughout the pandemic there had been a strong multi-agency focus on attendance with liaison between Head Teachers, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Social Workers and health colleagues to ensure the most vulnerable children received a co-ordinated approach to their education and on line learning.

With regard to referrals, it was reported that throughout the early stages of lockdown referrals reduced substantially with 38 children being referred during April 2020 compared to 102 during April 2019, however since June these numbers had steadily risen to nearer normal levels with 76 children referred during May 2020. It was also reported that although the number of contacts received regarding domestic abuse had decreased, a larger number of these progressed onto referral to social care which suggested a rise in the severity of the abuse and a higher level of impact/risk/concern for the child. There had also been an increase in the number of children who were feeling the impact of living with physical abuse.

Early Help services continued to respond to all contacts from professionals and members of the public, maintaining a focus of regular contact with families; services that were usually delivered through the children's centres were being delivered online, with advice about children's development and regular video sessions around play and positive interaction proving popular with families; some families required food parcels which were delivered by staff adhering to appropriate working practices; staff continue to review and offer telephone and virtual home visiting support where necessary and have been creative in responding to need using technology and social media; where communication with some children has proved challenging, increased use of the Mind of My Own app has been used to support this; and families open to Keeping Families Together (KFT) were also RAG rated using the Covid-19 risk assessment and had been offered ongoing face to face support throughout lockdown.

The submitted report highlighted missing episodes that were now reducing and reported that most children had adhered to lockdown measures and return home interviews had been carried out through virtual visits; the Assessment and Safeguarding teams continued to undertake assessments, reviews and multi-agency meetings by adapting to virtual mediums such as Microsoft Teams, FaceTime and WhatsApp video calls and where possible using social distancing and PPE, face to face home visits had taken place for children in need, children subject to Child Protection Plans and children who are in care; changes were made to the number of children accessing Harewood Hill Lodge short break centre to minimise the risk of Covid-19 and risk assessments identified the most vulnerable children who were provided with a targeted service; and it was reported that children and families had been very understanding of the change to the way social workers had stayed in touch by virtual contact.

With regard to Children in Care, it was reported that from the beginning of April there had been a total of 26 children brought into care with 61.54 per cent of those being placed with extended family members; during the pandemic the Family Courts adapted to new processes and reduced the type of hearing they would hear in order to manage virtual Court hearings and remained open for urgent applications in respect of children who are at risk of significant harm, however non urgent applications have been unable to be lodged with Court and Family Courts will re-open to non-urgent applications on 1 July 2020; contact between children in care and their families has been via virtual methods and it was reported that young children had found it extremely positive for some children in specific circumstances; it was reported that there had been minimal movement in placements as a result of Covid-19 and moves had only taken place when there had been risks of infection and the reduction in placement moves had resulted in an improved performance regarding the three or more placement moves in a rolling 12 month period for child; Therapeutic Practitioners were supporting social workers with young people and family mental health and well-being; social workers had continued to celebrate young people's birthdays; participation workers held weekly meetings to capture how young people were dealing with the Covid-19 restrictions; and Residential Homes had been working as per regulations and standards with staff maintaining a focus on safeguarding children in their care.

Care Leavers remained in contact with services and had been supported in various ways during the pandemic with continued weekly access to the Psychological Well-being Practitioner for Care Leavers via telephone; foster carers had been flexible to help the service provide placements to meet the needs of children and continued to receive virtual support; Adoption Tees Valley remained operational using remote means to engage adopters and liaise with assessing social workers in the local authority; during lockdown daily meetings had taken place between the local authority and the Regional Schools Commissioner and daily updates have been issued to schools form Education Services; the Schools Forum met on 14 January 2020 and agreed the School Funding Formula Growth Fund and central budgets for schools and early years for 2020/21; Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 reopened on 1 June and Secondary Schools followed for Year 10 and Year 12 from 15 June; a higher proportion of early years providers had remained open in Darlington than nationally and during the pandemic an Early Years Education Strategy Group was established to consider issues facing the sector and to develop strategies to support;

contact monitoring has been undertaken with private residential homes operating in Darlington and no matters of contractual compliance had been identified with positive outcomes for children and young people; and the Darlington Partnership welcomed David Gallagher as the new Statutory Safeguarding Partner representing the Health Sector with responsibility for the Tees Valley and Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Chair invited the school representatives on this Scrutiny Committee to give their views on the submitted report and their contact with the local authority throughout the pandemic and it was agreed among the representatives that there had been a good working relationship between the Council and the primary and secondary schools and they had felt well supported and that collaboration and communication had been very strong.

The Chair also acknowledged and congratulated the schools on the work they had undertaken in close collaboration with the local authority.

Members discussed the submitted report and in particular requested clarification on how confident Members can be with regard to contact with those pupils who were not back in school and was advised by Nick Lindsay the 11-19 Partnership representative that schools had been undertaking contact with those pupils by door knocks and garden visits to ensure some dialogue with vulnerable families was made and the Assistant Director of Children's Services also confirmed that Covid-19 Risk Assessments carried out by all organisations ensures those children are kept safe.

Members questioned if there had been any cost implications of 100 per cent of all Darlington schools remaining open with low numbers; acknowledged that it was positive to see staffing levels remained strong and services had been learning from lockdown whilst maintaining the quality of contact and that statutory visits continued to be carried out using virtual methods.

Members also discussed the supply of personal protection equipment; Voice of the Child visits; reassurances that children and families were receiving support; with regard to EHC Plans the utilisation of the flexibility of the legislation to undertake Regional Multi Agency Placement Panels; the ceasing of 'reasonable endeavours' at the end of July and how this would affect the authority in regard to timeliness.

The Chair acknowledged the work that had been undertaken with the children and families however reiterated the need to follow the outcomes for these families and suggested that Members carry out a 'deep dive' review and examine this issues in conjunction with the Parent Carer Forum.

Other issues discussed were in relation to on line engagement with those families who did not have English as a first language; digital inclusion and access for all children to laptops and wi-fi; the reasons for the initial increase of missing episodes at the beginning of lockdown; what arrangements were in place for the return of all children to school in September and the logistical challenges facing schools with the management of 'bubbles'; and discussion around the challenges around the High Needs Budget to fund special schools, individual EHC plans and packages for alternative provision.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That the thanks and congratulations of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to Children's Services and all educational settings during these difficult times.

This page is intentionally left blank

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 SEPTEMBER 2020**

INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

SUMMARY REPORT**Purpose of the Report**

The Independent Review Officer (IRO) service is set within the statutory framework of the IRO Handbook (2010), linked to revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance which were introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO changed from the management of the Review process to a wider overview of the child's case including regular monitoring and follow-up between Reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of Care Planning for Looked After Children (LAC) and for challenging drift and delay. Further details of the role of the IRO are set out in the attached report.

Summary

The Annual IRO report is produced by the Children's Safeguarding Unit (CSU) and provides an overview of the work by the IRO Service in relation to Looked After Children, including the Dispute Resolution Process as required by the statutory guidance. The report also provides an overview of the performance of the unit in a range of responsibilities, activities and functions, including Child Protection, training and advice to professionals. The report also highlights areas for further development.

The statutory requirements for individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children, A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (July 2018). Working Together stipulates that the chair of a Child Protection Conference needs to be accountable to the Director of Children's Services, and should be a professional, independent of operational and / or line management responsibilities for the case.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:-

- (a) Members note the content of this annual report

Suzanne Joyner

Director of Children and Adults Services

Role of the Independent Reviewing Officers

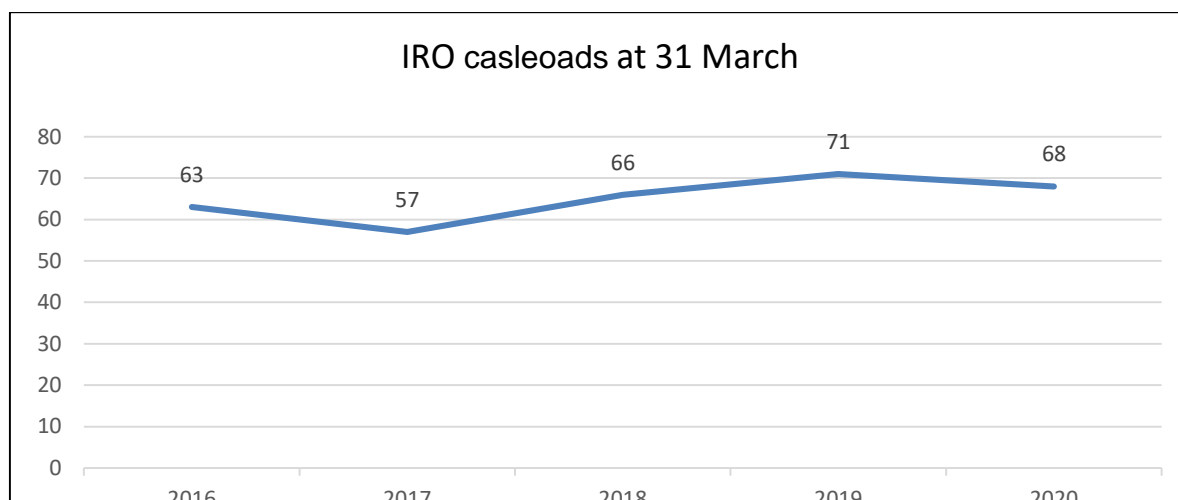
1. The Independent Reviewing Officers are committed to achieving the best outcomes for all children and young people in Darlington, particularly the most vulnerable; including, children who are looked after and those subject to Child Protection Plans.
2. The Service has an independent role to ensure that all children, whatever their religious or cultural background, receive the same care and safeguards with regard to abuse and neglect.
3. The service is responsible for the following statutory functions:
 - a) Initial Child Protection Conferences
 - b) Child Protection Review Conferences
 - c) Looked After Children Reviews
 - d) Annual Foster Carer Reviews
 - e) Adoption Reviews
 - f) Disruption Meetings
 - g) Reviews of children placed in Secure Accommodation
4. IROs undertake a range of non-statutory functions including, providing advice and guidance to professionals, facilitating single and multi-agency child protection training, are members of formal panels, management meetings and undertake case learning audits.

Staffing Levels and Caseloads

5. Responsibility for the operational management, performance and development of the Service lies with the Head of Service for Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement, who reports directly to the Assistant Director, Children's Services.
6. During 2019-20 the IRO team has been stable and all substantive posts remain permanent appointments. At 31 March 2020 there were 5.2 IRO posts plus an additional 0.4 agency post to undertake Annual Foster Carer Reviews.
7. The Independent Reviewing Officers are supported by a full time Business Support Team Leader and 5.0 permanent Business Support Officers (one post is term time only).
8. The Independent Reviewing Officer's handbook (2010) recommends that caseloads for IROs need to be between 50 and 70 LAC children.
9. The National Children's Bureau; *The Role of the Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) in England* (March 2014) reported that:

"Being employed by the local authority usually meant carrying out other duties not specified in the IRO guidance. Having to chair child protection conferences as well as looked after children's reviews was mostly, but not universally, seen as a benefit in providing continuity for children subject to a child protection plan who then become looked after. However, other duties, such as conducting Regulation 33 visits or foster carer reviews, were not always seen as appropriate for IROs. There were concerns that these activities could lead to a conflict of interest and compromise IROs' independence."
10. Annual Foster Carer Reviews continue to be undertaken by a part-time agency Reviewing Officer to ensure independence and avoid any conflict of interest with in-house foster carers.

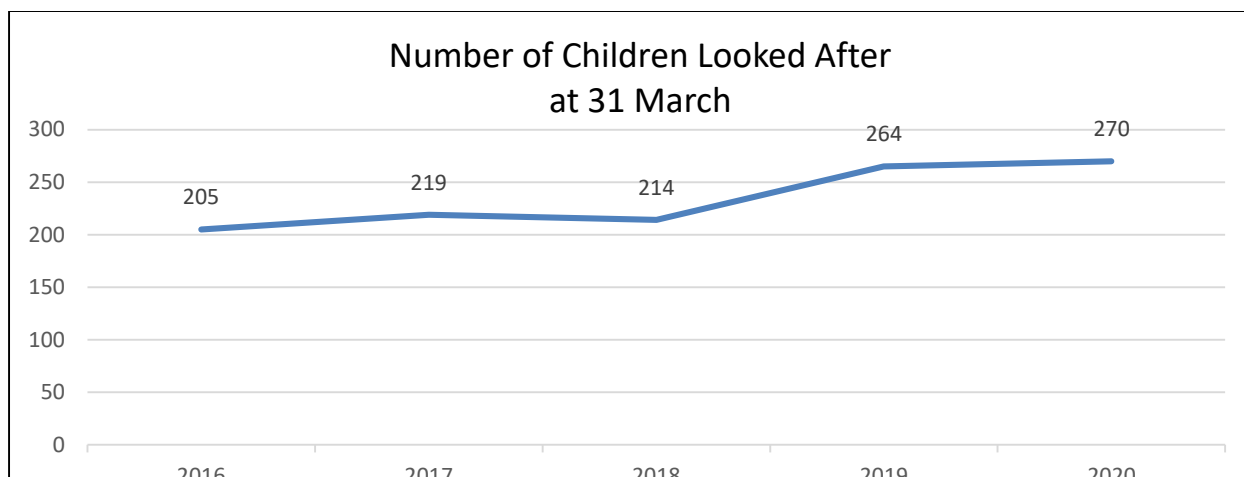
11. Over the last 12 months, the requirement around the size of caseloads for IROs in Darlington has fallen slightly from an average of 71 children to 68 children. This remains at the upper limit of the statutory guidance.



12. This figure does not include additional work undertaken by IROs:
- one IRO is a member of the Children's Placement Service Panel (14 Panels held annually)
 - another provides Multi-agency Child Protection training sessions (12 sessions in year).
13. When caseloads are manageable it allows IROs to have sufficient time to provide a quality service to each Looked After Child including meeting with the child before the review to ensure that their views are clearly understood, consulting with social workers following significant changes, monitoring drift and where appropriate, ensuring that a challenge is made.
14. In addition to LAC Reviews and Child Protection Conferences, IROs have undertaken monthly case file audits and the chairing of, Secure Reviews and Disruption Meetings.
15. There is a statutory requirement in the IRO Handbook to ensure sufficient administrative support to Independent Reviewing Officers in relation to Looked After Reviews. Current responsibilities include the administering and producing a record of Child Protection Conferences as well as the administrative function in relation to Looked After Children. Regular meetings are held with the Business Support Team leader to agree how the team can best support the Children's Safeguarding Unit.

Looked After Children

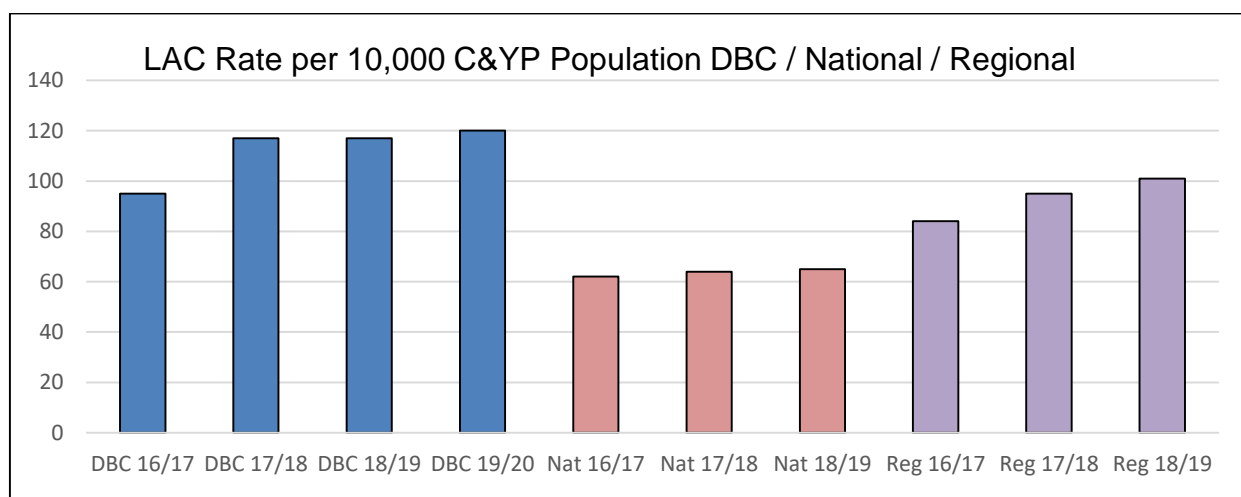
16. At the end of March 2020 there were 270 Children Looked After in Darlington, a similar position to the previous year (264) which had experienced a significant increase. This follows the relatively stable position that has been in place since 2016.
17. The chart below shows the monthly number of Looked After Children (LAC) over the last 56 years.



18. The rate in Darlington has remained high; it plateaued with only small increases though 2016 to 2018. There was a significant increase in numbers during the summer of 2018 followed by a relatively stable period over the last 12 months.

Looked After Children rate per 10,000

19. The table below is expressed as the rate per 10,000, which allows benchmarking with other councils (the most recent published data on National and comparator groups of North East authorities and statistical neighbours).



20. At the end of March 2020, 270 children were looked after by Darlington a rate of 120.1 per 10,000, a slight increase from the rate of 117.20 per 10,000 for 2018/19.
21. Analysis shows that Darlington continues to have a significantly higher rate of Looked After Children than both the Regional and Statistical neighbours' average. It should be noted the most recent published data is as of 31 March 2019 and there has been a national increase in Children Looked After over the year. The comparator figures for 31 March 2019 will be published in the autumn.

LAC Demographics

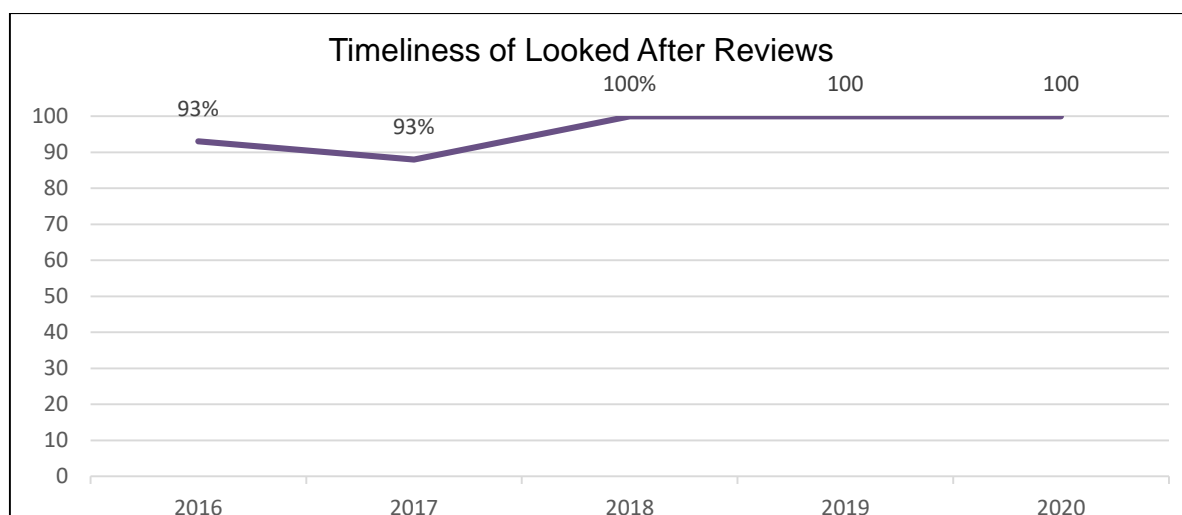
Age Looked After Children (as of 31 st March)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Under 1	8%	8%	5%	8%	15	6%
1-4	18%	16%	15%	16%	51	19%
5-9	21%	26%	26%	26%	71	26%
10-15	34%	33%	35%	39%	100	37%
16-17	20%	17%	18%	12%	33	12%
Total	205	219	214	264	270	

22. The age profile of Darlington's Looked After population has remained stable over the last 4 years. The majority of Looked After Children in Darlington are aged between 10 and 15 years which is similar to the distribution nationally.

Ethnicity of Looked After Children (as of 31 st March)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
White	94%	90%	92%	91%	244	90%
Mixed	4%	6%	4%	5%	12	4%
Asian or Asian British	1%	3%	3%	3%	9	3%
Black or Black British	1%	1%	1%	1%	5	2%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Total	205	219	214	264	270	

23. The ethnic population of Looked After Children in Darlington has remained stable over the previous 4 years. Although this does not match the national distribution, this is predictable due to the comparative lack of ethnic diversity within the Darlington population as a whole.

Looked After Reviews and Timescales



24. The above chart shows that during 2019-20 performance in relation to the percentage of LAC cases which were reviewed within statutory timescales was 100%, maintaining the improvements made in recent 4 years.

LAC Participation and contact with IRO

25. Participation applies to children or young people (subject to age and understanding; Care Planning, Placement and Case Review, DCSF March 2010).
26. Participation is based on one of the following methods of participation:
- attending their Review and speaking on their own behalf;
 - attending their review but having another person speak for them;
 - not attending the review but providing their views in a written form or through another facilitative medium; and /or
 - not attending the review but briefing an advocate to represent their views
27. Children's participation in their Looked After Review looks at those children over the age of 4 years who participate in their statutory review through attending or other form of contribution (via advocate, written submission etc.). At the end of this reporting year, 787 individual Looked After Reviews were held, an 11% increase on the 712 held the previous year (but a 37% increase in activity over the last two years).

Aged Under 4	C&YP Participation in Reviews (over the age of 4 years)	
	Participated	Did not Participate
196	563 (96%)	22 (4%)

28. The aim will be to increase the proportion of children and young people over the age of 4 that attend their review meeting, and to reduce the number of meetings where there is no views expressed.
29. IROs play a key role in actively seeking the views for children who do not wish to attend their reviews and to see what would assist in getting them there. Independent Reviewing Officers ensure that young people are able to make contact with them if they have any concerns. Once a new admission to care is allocated, the IRO will contact the child, if aged 4 or over and make arrangements to meet them prior to their LAC review. All contact details are provided at the time of allocation.
30. The IRO Handbook recommends the IRO meets with the child / young person within their placement, prior to the Looked After Review meeting or as part of the process. With the reduction in IRO caseloads over the last year this contact with young people between reviews has continued to improve. IROs continue to offer the option of attending earlier than the review time to meet with the child or young person on the day of the scheduled review if they have not been able to visit them prior or in circumstances where the placement is at a significant distance from Darlington.
31. The expectation with regards to IRO visiting and maintaining contact are set out in the IRO Standards for Looked After Children and their families as well as a pledge specifically aimed at our looked after children. IROs currently record on the Liquid Logic case management system when they visit, have a telephone conversation, or other form communication, with a child or young person.

Permanence Planning and Adoption

32. At the second LAC Review scheduled within 4 months of a child or young person becoming looked after, the Permanence Plan should be agreed. The IRO will then actively monitor the

care planning process to minimize any drift or delay.in 2018/19 all children had their permanency plan discussed at their 4 month review.

33. Additional Looked After Children Reviews are required when a child is to be adopted. When a child becomes the subject of a Placement Order an Adoption Review is required within 3 months of the Order being made. For children moving into an adoption placement additional reviews are held within 28 days and at 3 months regardless of when the last looked after review was held. It is therefore possible for individual children to have up to four Looked After Reviews within a twelve month period.

Dispute Resolution Process

34. One of the key functions of the IRO is to resolve problems arising out of the Care Planning process. The Dispute Resolution process reinforces the authority of the IRO and their accountability for decisions made at reviews. IROs will refer to the process when they feel that is appropriate to follow up on recommendations that have not been auctioned or where the implementation of a Care Plan is delayed. IROs will in the first instance use informal negotiation to resolve issues, and only where this is not successful will a formal challenge be made by instigating the Dispute Resolution Process.
35. There is good evidence of the 'IRO footprint' being evidenced on children's records. The letter form Ofsted following the Focused Visit in February 2019 stated:
- Independent reviewing officers (IROs) have become more effective since the last inspection (February / March 2018). They appropriately challenge Social Workers and Team Managers to help progress plans and reduce delay for children.
36. Evidence of IRO involvement in cases is checked via Learning Audits, dip sampling and through regular case supervision.

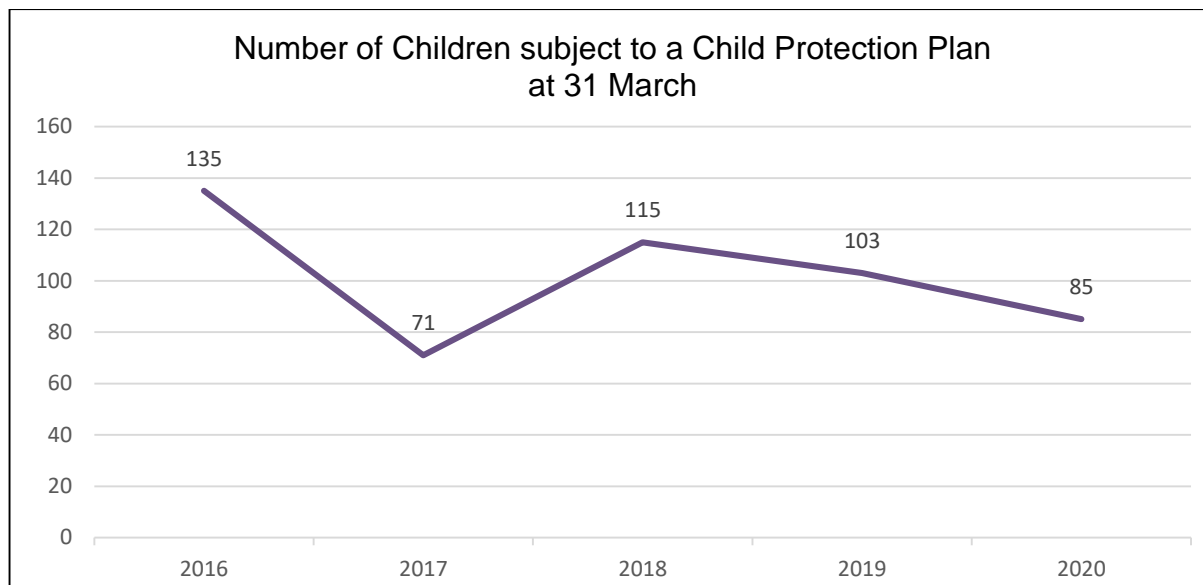
Foster Carer Reviews

37. Local Authorities are required by Regulation 29 (The Fostering Services Regulations 2001) to review the approval of foster carers at least once a year and the Reviewing & Development Service is responsible for undertaking the annual reviews. The additional part-time agency IRO has been retained. Ofsted during their re-inspection of Services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers; commented that it was good practice to have someone other than an IRO undertaking this role due to possible conflicts of interest.
38. Any significant changes to circumstances, or concerns raised at the Annual Review, are referred to the Children's Placement Service Panel. All required

Child Protection Activity

39. Number of Children subject to Child Protection Plans

The chart below shows the number of Children subject to Child Protection Plans (CPP) over the last 5 years.



40. The total number of children with a Child Protection Plan on 31st March 2020 was 85; a rate of 37.8 per 10,000 children under the age of 18yrs. This is a decrease from the figure position at the end of March 2019, when the figure stood at 103 (a rate of 45.7 per 10,000).

Rate per 10,000 of Children Subject to Child Protection Plans at 31 st March	2018 / 19			2019/20
	Darlington	North East	England	Darlington
National stats table (D1)	45.7	63.1	43.7	37.8

41. The rate of children who were the subject of a Child Protection Plan as of 31 March 2020 remains below North East and inline England averages of 31st March 2019. Published benchmark data for 2019/20 will be available later in the year.

Child Protection Demographics

42. At the end 2019/20, of the 85 children subject to a Child Protection Plan. Nationally the most recent published data for March 2019. In the tables below please note that the percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Age of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan / (as of 31 st March)	DBC 2019	National 2019	DBC 2020

Unborn	2%	8%	5%
Under 5	47%	16%	24%
5 -10	34%	26%	35%
11-15	17%	33%	29%
16 +	1%	17%	7%
Total	103		85

Category of Child Protection Plan / (as of 31 st March)	DBC 2019	National 2019	DBC 2020
Neglect	68%	48%	38%
Physical	4%	7%	8%
Sexual	5%	4%	8%
Emotional	23%	38%	45%
Multiple	0	3%	0
Total	103		85

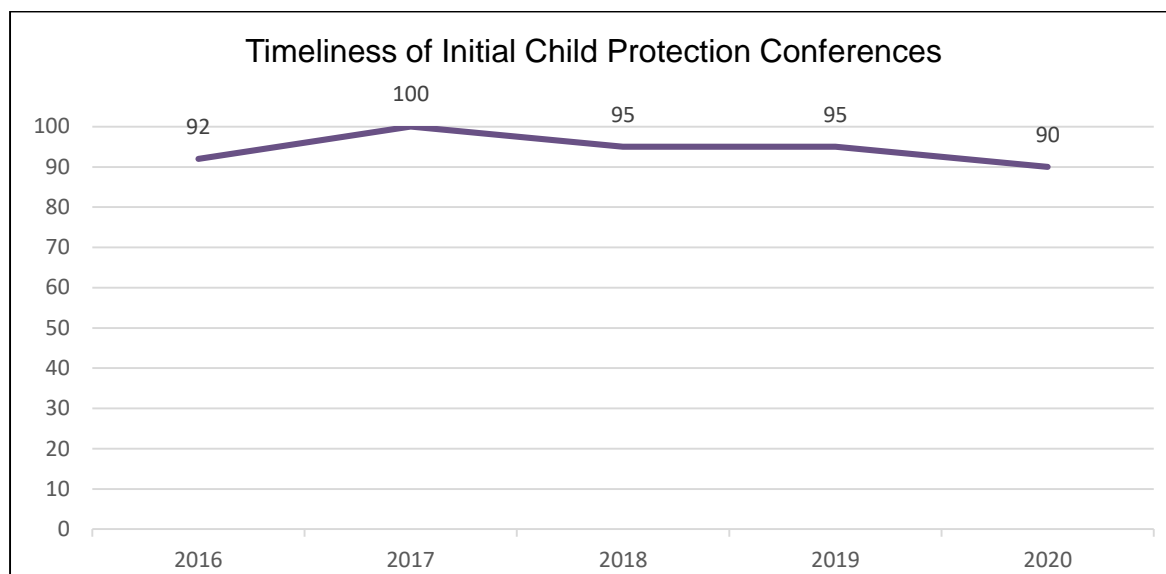
43. The proportion of Children subject to Child Protection Plan where the risk is Physical Abuse or Sexual Abuse remains broadly in line with the national position. Locally the interpretation of the impact of emotional harm in cases of neglect may inflate the percentage of cases categorised as being at risk from Emotional Abuse. Although multiple-categories should not be used this is still utilised in some local authority areas and therefore appears in the national statistics.
44. On the 31st March 2019 there were 103 children subject to Child Protection Plans; over the 12 months to 31st March 2020 this had decreased to 85 children. 173 Children had Plans removed and 155 new Plans were made.

CP Plan Activity	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Becoming subject to a CP Plan	171	102	138	180	155
Ceasing to be the subject of a CP	122	166	94	192	173
Increase / decrease	+49	- 64	+44	-12	-18

45. The table above shows overall activity in relation to Child Protection Plans (numbers becoming subject to or ceasing). The situation in the last two years has been relatively stable when compared to the larger fluctuations seen in previous years.
46. Over the year, 97 Initial Child Protection Conferences and 16 Transfer Conferences [a combined total of 203 children] and 171 Child Protection Review Conferences were held [342 children].
47. The corresponding figures for the previous year were 114 Initial Child Protection Conferences and 19 Transfer Conferences [combined total of 220 children] In addition to this there were 191 Child Protection Review Conferences [375 children]. This was a slight decrease in activity when compared to the previous year.
48. In the year, the proportion of children subject to ICPCs who were not made subject to a Child Protection Plan was 16.6% similar level to the previous year [14.3%].
49. In Darlington at the end of March, there was one child open to Life-stages who was subject to a Child Protection Plan (i.e. Children with Disabilities). A very slight increase on the position

over the previous two years when there was no child with a disability subject to a Child Protection Plan at the year end. This information is not currently part of the nationally published data so no comparison is available.

Timeliness of ICPCs

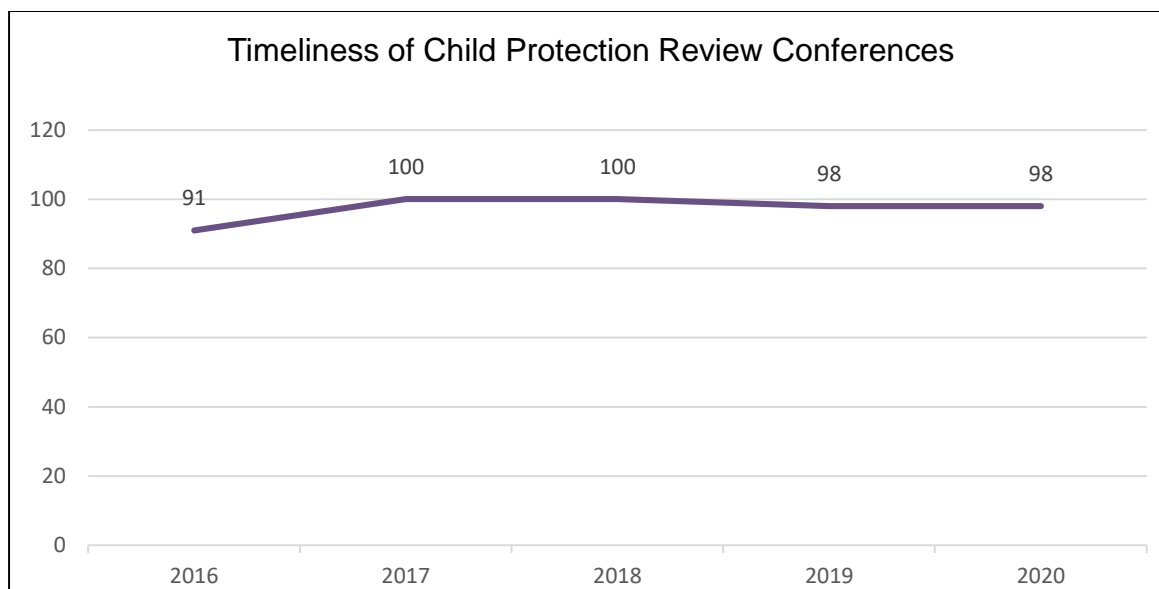


50. The chart above tracks the ICPCs held within the year and records the percentage that are held within 15 working days of the Section 47 enquiry.
51. For the year to 31st March 2020, 153 (90%) of children were subject to an ICPC (excludes transfer conferences) that was held within the prescribed 15 working days of the Section 47 Enquiry. Although performance has dropped over the year it remains higher than statistical benchmarks; regional [82%], statistical neighbours [82%] and national benchmark of [79%]. Eighteen children from five families had meetings delayed for the following reasons:
- delay in key information being available for conference,
 - availability of a key professional,
 - availability of interpreter to attend, and
 - a father being abroad on the date that the meeting was due to be held.

In each case an interim plan was in place to ensure that the children were safeguarded.

Timeliness of CPRCs

52. The Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance requires that the first review should be within 3 months of the initial child protection conference and thereafter at intervals of no more than 6 months.



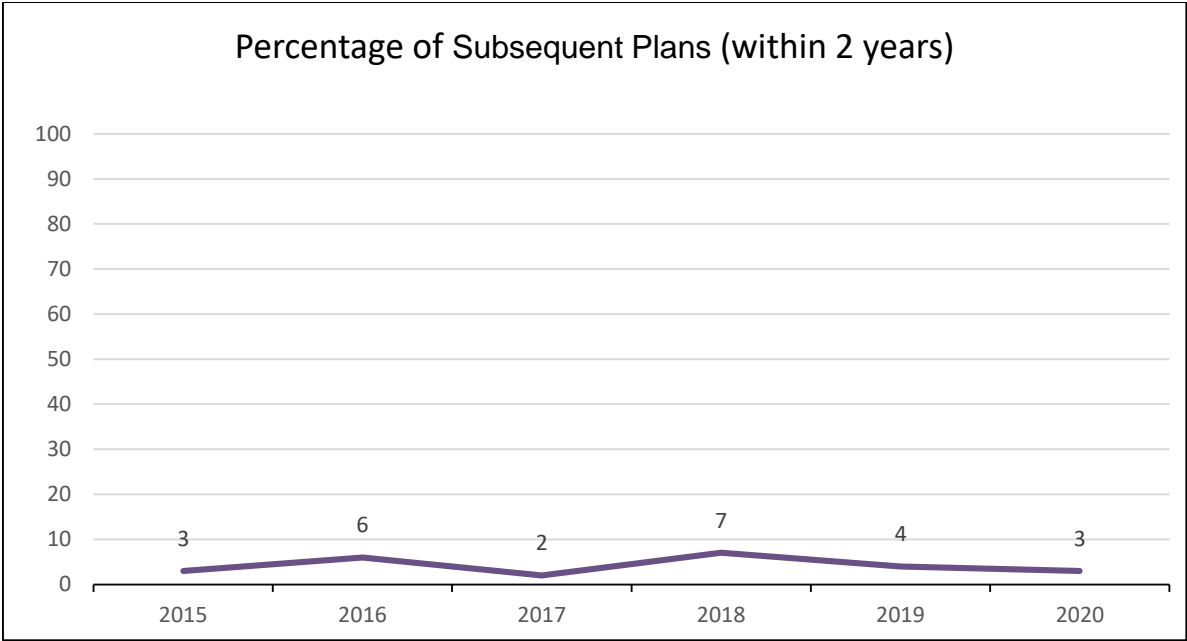
53. The above chart tracks the percentage of Child Protection cases which were reviewed within statutory timescales in the year. Good performance for this indicator is typified by a higher percentage, ideally 100%. In recent years this has been an area of good performance.
54. For the year to 31st March 2020, 98% of children had their Child Protection Review Conferences within timescales [98%], the same as last year. Again performance in this area remains higher than regional [93%], national [92%] and statistical neighbours [94%].

Child Protection Review Conferences within timescales	2018/2019			2019/20
	Darlington	North East	England	Darlington
	98%	93%	92%	98%

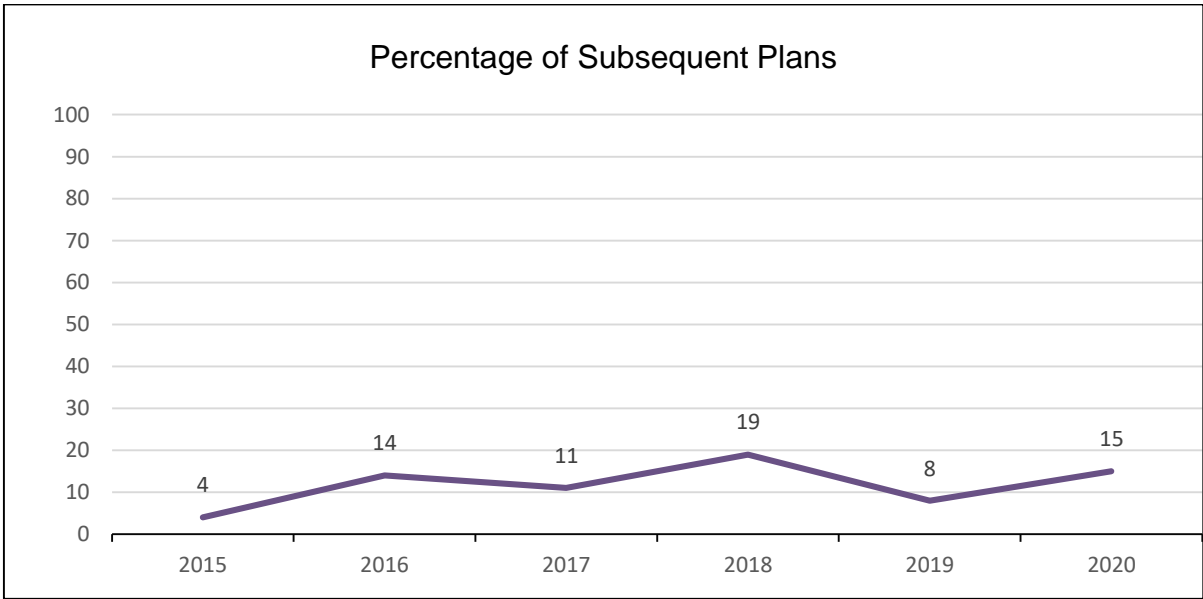
55. Published benchmark data for 2019/20 will be available later in the year.

Second or Subsequent Plans

56. The chart below shows the percentage of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plans for a second or subsequent time (within 24 months).

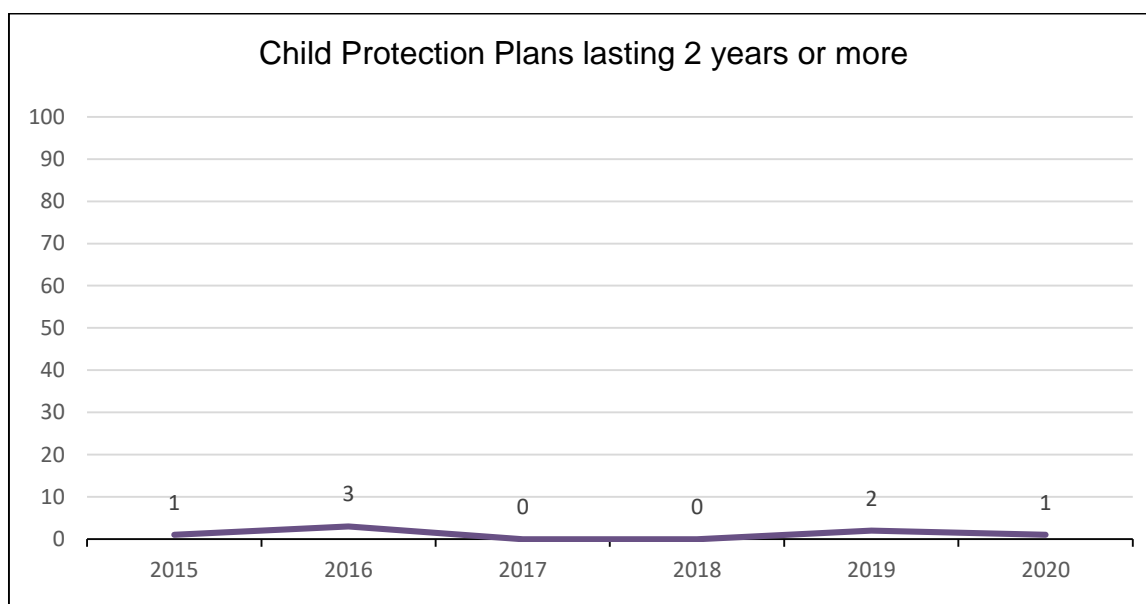


57. This indicator is a proxy for the level and quality of service a child receives. Its purpose is to monitor whether Children's Social Care Services devise and implement a Child Protection Plan which leads to lasting improvement in a child's safety and overall well-being. Good performance for this indicator is typified by a lower figure. However, it is acknowledged that a second or subsequent child protection plan will sometimes be necessary to deal with adverse changes to the child's circumstances.



58. National benchmarked data is based on a second or subsequent plan being agreed at any time after a previous plan. Our rate for 2019-20 had was 14.7%, although this was an increase it remains better than both the England average of 20.8% and the regional average which is 21.8% (most recent published data).

Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more



59. The above chart tracks the number of children who had been the subject of a Child Protection Plan continuously for two years or longer against the number of children ceasing to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan during the year, expressed as percentage.
60. This indicator reflects the underlying principle that professionals should be working towards specified outcomes which, if implemented effectively, should lead to the majority of children not needing to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan within a two year period, however it is recognised that some children will need Child Protection Plans for longer. Good performance is therefore typified by a lower percentage.
61. The period of time that children are subject to a Child Protection Plan is monitored by the Children's Safeguarding Unit Manager with particular attention given to tracking cases where they are:
- Approaching their first Child Protection Review Conference, and
 - 15 months after a Child Protection Plan is put in place.

This system has ensured that cases are reviewed in a timely manner, and that there is an appropriate level of scrutiny on the plans made for children and young people.

62. The percentage of children ceasing to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan who had been the subject of a Child Protection Plan continuously for two years or longer was 0.6% during the year to 31st March 2020.
63. The percentage of Child Plans ceasing where the plan had lasted more than 2 years in Darlington is currently below both the North East average [2.2%] and England [3.3%] averages at 31st March 2019. Published benchmark data for 2019/2009 will be available later in the year.

Family attendance at Conference

64. In the year, out of 97 invitations, parents attended 89 Initial Child Protection Conferences, a total of 92%, in-line with the rate in recent years.
65. In the year, out of 171 invitations, family members attended 152 Child Protection Review Conferences, a total of 89%, again in-line with the rate in recent years. Generally the rate for Child Protection Reviews tends to be lower by a few percentage points.

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Percentage of ICPCs attended by parent	97%	94%	95%	94%	92%
Percentage of CPRCs attended by parent	94%	91%	91%	91%	89%

66. Over the year to 31st March 2020, no family members with parental responsibility were excluded from attending child protection conferences.
67. A draft Child Protection Plan is produced at the end of the Initial Child Protection Conference enabling professionals and family members to leave the meeting with a copy. The plan is therefore available at the first Core Group that is held within 10 working days of the Initial Child Protection Conference.
68. The Unit is committed to promoting independent advocacy for children and young people. The Council has a contract with the National Youth Advocacy Service which provides an independent and confidential service. If the young person is not in attendance the IRO should ensure that there is an agreed action for the Core Group regarding how the advocacy role will be communicated to the child or young person.

Management

Quality Assurance

69. In order to ensure that the effectiveness of the Unit and ability to provide a key Quality Assurance function, it is essential that the Independent Review Team have the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding.
70. The quality and effectiveness of the Children's Safeguarding Unit is ensured through:
 - Workload Allocation
 - Supervision and Personal Development Review (PDR)
 - Team Meetings
 - Audit
 - Training and Development
 - Direct Observation

Workload Allocation

71. All Looked After Children and / or children subject to Child Protection Plans are allocated a designated IRO with the intention that where possible the allocated IRO will remain consistent, until the child is no longer Looked After or subject to a Child Protection Plan. The team has been permanently staffed over the period covered by this report, with no staff changes requiring temporary cover. This is positive position when compared to previous years.
72. Allocations are monitored regularly and form part of the discussion in monthly supervision sessions.

Supervision and Annual Appraisal

73. Monthly supervision is undertaken with Independent Reviewing Officers that includes:

- Caseloads
- Performance issues (team / individual)
- Relevant case discussions
- IRO Disputes
- Training (attended / needs identified)
- Involvement of young people (visits by IRO / attendance at conference / LAC Reviews)

74. Annual Personal Development Reviews are undertaken in line with corporate arrangements.

Team Meetings

75. Scheduled Team Meetings are held a minimum of a 12 times in year and are augmented with development sessions (normally two in year). Team meetings cover a range of practice issues, updates on local, regional and national developments, sharing of good practice and learning from reviews and inspections. Additional meetings are held with IROs when necessary. Some sessions focus on the work of the IROs, while others have included the Administration staff who support the IROs.

76. This year IRO development sessions have focused on a restorative approach that is part of the Leeds Strengthening Families Programme.

Audit

77. Since the Ofsted re-inspection (February and March 2018), IROs have been integral to the Learning Audits programme. In 2019/20 all IROs have completed audits in line with the monthly quality assurance cycle. This process includes the case-holder in the audit process.

Training and Development

78. Individual training requirements for IROs are identified through supervision and annual appraisals.

79. Bespoke Disruption Meeting Training for IROs was provided sub-regionally in May 2019, all IROs participated in the Regional IRO Conference in October 2019 and they also benefited from the Darlington Staff Conference in January 2020.

80. In the year, two team members have completed the National Assessment Accreditation System (NAAS) for Social Workers and all IROs are registered with Social Work England.

81. IROs continue to provide multi-agency child protection training in partnership with the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Trainer

82. Outside of this IROs complete training in line with corporate requirements.

Observations

83. The Children's Safeguarding Unit is open to external scrutiny. During 2019/20 this has included observations on behalf of Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. A programme number of observations were completed by subgroup members from July 2019 – October 2019.

84. To ensure that quality of practice each year a programme of direct observations of IROs of Looked After Reviews and Conference Chairs of Child Protection Conferences is undertaken by the IRO line manager.

Next steps for 2020/21

85. The following are scheduled for action in 2020/21

- a) To develop a relational approach to the conduct of Child Protection Conferences in line with The Leeds Strengthening Families approach.
- b) To extend the learning from the relational practice developed around Child Protection Conferences to the statutory Child Looked After Review process. This will include improve performance in relation to how children and young people participate in their looked after reviews.
- c) In aligning our approach (as above) to develop consistency and a “team offer” regarding the service provided by the Children’s Safeguarding Unit.
- d) Ensuring the IRO footprint his continues to be a focus for IROs. This needs to be evident in recording and IRO disputes.

Martin Graham
Head of Service QA & PI
20 July 2020

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **7 September 2020**

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS Q4 2019/20

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with an update on performance against key performance indicators.

Summary

2. This report provides Quarter 4 (January – March) 2019/20 performance information in line with an indicator set agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 2 July 2018, and subsequently by Scrutiny Committee Chairs.
3. It is suggested monitoring focuses on issues and exceptions, and relevant Assistant Directors will be in attendance at the meeting to respond to queries raised by the committee regarding the performance information contained within this report.
4. Where indicators are reported annually, quarterly updates will not be available.

Where are we performing well?

5. 17.2% of re-referrals were repeated within 12 months, which is better than the target of 18%.
6. 100% of children with a Child Protection Plan and 100% of Children Looked After have been allocated to a qualified social worker.
7. Year to date, 0.6% of children who had their Child Protection Plan (CPP) ceased, had been subject to a CPP for 2 years or more. This continues to remain below the target of 5%.
8. 89.0% of statutory looked after children visits were completed within the timescale performance against this indicator has continued to improve throughout the year as a result of being closely managed.
9. 73.6% of looked after children aged under 16 (who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years), had been in their current placement continuously for at least 2 years.
10. 94.3% of looked after children who were due a review health check received them within the required timescale.
11. 90.2% of looked after children who were due a review dental check received them within the required timescale.

12. 28.1% of Care Leavers were not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Where do we need to improve?

13. 86.8% of referrals were screened and completed within 1 day, slightly below target of 90%.

14. 89.5% of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) were held within 15 working days from the Strategy meeting being held/Section 47 being initiated.

15. Timeliness of assessments is 88.7%, and although this is just below target of 90% (at 88.7%), it is important that social workers have time to undertake good quality direct work. It is under constant monitoring, whilst balancing the time taken and good social work practice.

16. 92.0% statutory child protection visits were completed within 15 working days, with 79.6% completed within our internal aspirational target of 10 working days. The key indicator of 15 days however performs well.

17. The rate of looked after children has increased and is currently 120.1 per 10,000 population (270 children), compared to 117.2 per 10,000 population (264) last year. This continues to be a priority focus of our work and the Strengthening Families Programme.

Recommendation

18. It is recommended:

- a) That performance information provided in this report is reviewed and noted, and relevant queries raised with the appropriate Assistant Director.

Suzanne Joyner
Director of Children and Adult Services

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Sharon Raine Head of Performance and Transformation: Extension 6091

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Council's Crime and Disorder responsibilities
Health and Well Being	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents
Sustainability	This report supports the Council's sustainability responsibilities
Diversity	This report supports the promotion of diversity
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes
Efficiency	Scrutiny of performance is integral to optimising outcomes.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report may have an impact on their emotional and physical health, social development, education and future employment.

This page is intentionally left blank



Children's Social Care Performance & Quality Assurance Report

Quarter 4 (January - March 2020) and Year End

Scrutiny

Quarter 4 2019/20 Performance Summary

Referral:

The referrals completed within 1 working day has seen a steady improvement since Q2, giving a year end figure of 86.8%.

Re-Referrals:

Children who are re-referred compare favourably with statistical neighbour, regional and national comparators with a rate of 17.2%.

Early Help:

There has been an increase of 24 Early Help Assessments completed from the previous year, with a total of 893 by the end of 2019/20.

Missing:

Of the children who go missing from home, 85.8% have been offered an interview within the 72-hour timescale. Where the coordinator cannot engage the young person, discussion takes place with parents, carers, teachers or social workers to offer insight around reducing the missing episodes. Of those young people who went missing, 17.7% were Children in Care.

Children & Families Assessments:

950 Children were assessed by the end of Q4 2019/20, which represents a 7.3% decrease on the same period last year. The rate of assessments is 422.7 per 10,000 of the population.

Timeliness:

Social workers completed 88.7% of timely assessments on children, which is an increase from the same period last year (81.5%), although slightly below our target of 90%.

Section 47 enquiries:

During 2019/20, there were 484 Section 47 enquiries started which is 162 (25.1%) fewer when compared with the previous year (646), our year end rate of enquiries per 10,000 population was 216.2.

Child Protection Conferences:

By year end 2019/20, the cumulative figure for Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) being held within 15 working days from the strategy meeting / Section 47 being initiated was 89.5%, (18 children), excluding transfer-in conferences, against our target of 95%.

Child Protection Plans:

85 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan as at the end of March 2020, which equates to a rate of 37.8 per 10,000 population, compared to 103 and a rate of 45.7 per 10,000 population for the same period last year. All Child Protection cases were allocated to a Social Worker.

Child Protection Statutory visits:

79.6% of children received a statutory child protection visit during 2019/20 within 10 working days. Statutory visits that do not take place within timescales are scrutinised each month and where visits are not taking place in a timely manner, they are generally missed only by a day or two, and those which are longer are due to non-engagement of families and escalated accordingly.

Children in Care:

By the end of 2019/20 the number of Children in Care was 270. During Q4 2019/20 a total number of 22 children came into the care of the Local Authority. This is lower than Q1 2019/20 (37) and Q2 2019/20 (32), although higher than Q3 2019/20 when 18 children came into care. During 2019/20, 104 children ceased to be in care.

Statutory visits of Children in Care

89.0% of children in care received their timely statutory visit during 2019/20, which is an improvement on last year. Those statutory visits that do not take place within timescale are scrutinised each month with action taken if required.

Placements:

By the end of 2019/20 the percentage of children who had experienced 3 or more placement moves was 11.1%. It should be noted that some children in this cohort have moved for positive reasons, such as to an adoption placement or to their long-term placement.

The percentage of children who had been in their current placement for 2 years or more was 73.6% by the end of 2019/20, exceeding the target set of 68%. The sustained improvement in this performance has a positive impact on children in care, as they are able to experience permanent,

consistent and stable home lives with their carer, enabling them to focus their energies on being children and young people who are able to develop both physically and emotionally, rather than worry about where they may be moved to next.

The percentage of children placed 20 miles or more away from home is in line with our target at 9.6%. This relates to 25 young people who have been placed in residential care due to their disability / with family / or adoption and this provision was not available within 20 miles.

Dental and Health Review:

By the end of 2019/20, 93.3% of children in care who were due a review health check have had one completed and recorded.

Similarly, by the end of 2019/20, 90.2% of children in care that were due a dental check assessment have had one completed.

The percentage of children who have refused their medical checks has continued to decrease, with only 7 refusing their health review and 13 refusing their dental review by the end of the year. Although they are refusing, they are continually reminded of the benefits of having a check-up and encouraged to take part.

Care Leavers:

98.2% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation by the end of 2019/20. Custody is not recognised as suitable accommodation.

The percentage of Care Leavers who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) positively continues to exceed the target set of 30% at 28.1% by the end of 2019/20.

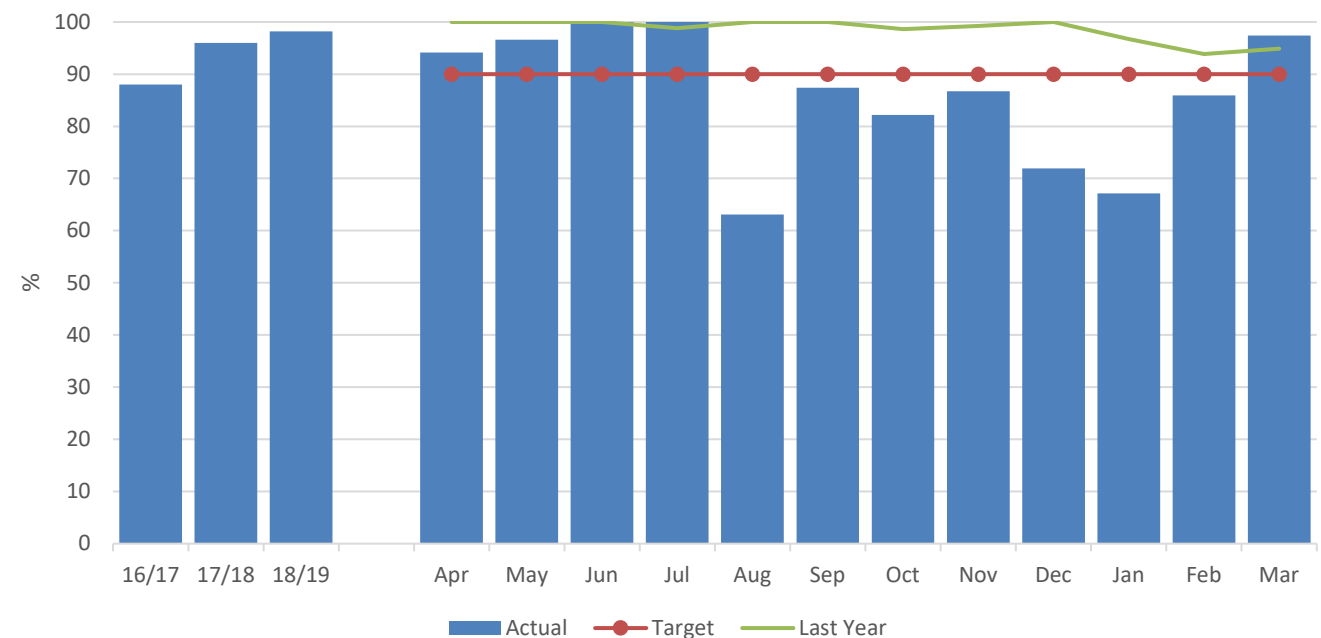
REFERRALS - TIMELINESS	
DEFINITION	Percentage of referrals completed within 24 hours and over 72 hours. Referrals completed within 24 hours indicates that decisions regarding the services required are made in a timely manner to minimise drift and delay and to ensure that children are safe.
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	The referrals completed within 1 working day has seen a steady improvement since Q2 2019/20 giving a year end total of 86.8%.

CSC 022

CSC 022: Monthly % of referrals completed within 1 working day.

Monthly % of referrals completed within 1 working day.

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	90%
	Apr-19	94.2
	May-19	96.6
	Jun-19	100.0
	Jul-19	100.0
	Aug-19	63.1
	Sep-19	87.4
	Oct-19	82.2
	Nov-19	86.7
	Dec-19	71.9
	Jan-20	67.1
	Feb-20	85.9
	Mar-20	97.4
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	88.0
	2017/18	96.0
	2018/19	98.2
	2019/20	86.8



REFERRALS - RE-REFERRALS

DEFINITION

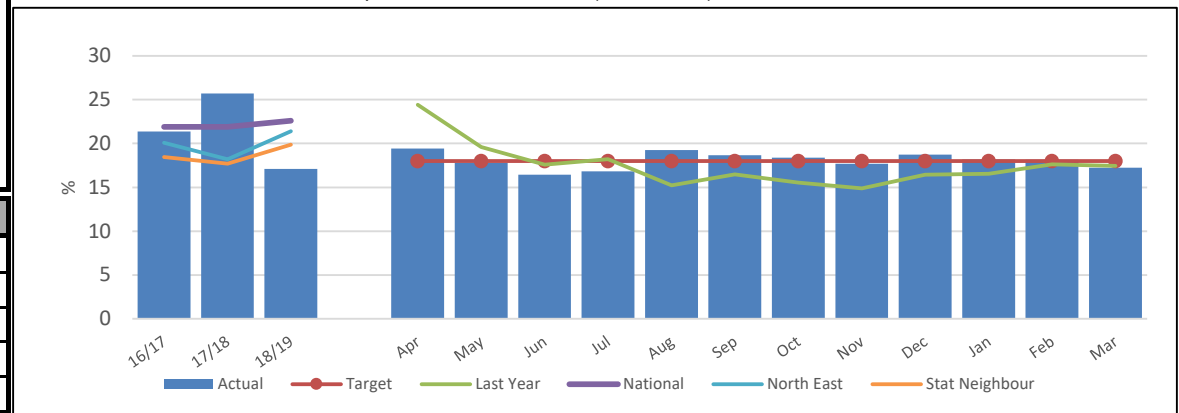
Percentage of re-referrals that are received within 12 months of a previous referral (based on referral start dates)
A re-referral to Children's Social Care could be an indication that the previous referral was inappropriately closed down without addressing the initial concerns or issues.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

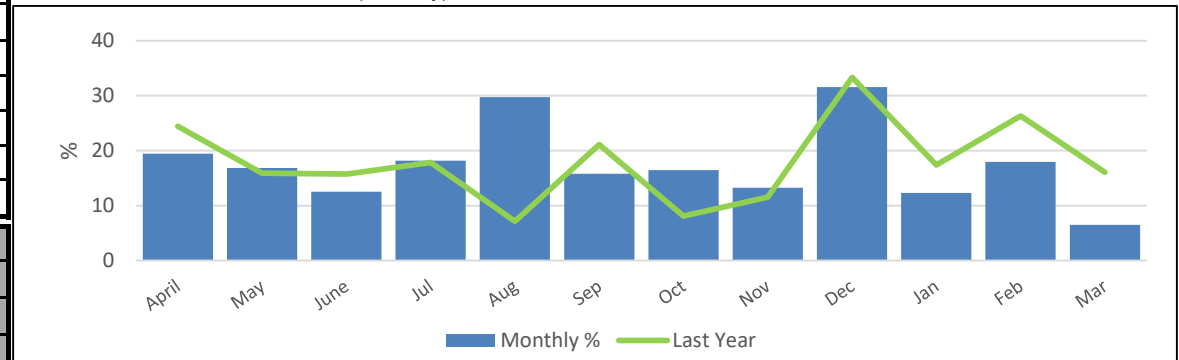
171 re-referrals have been made during 2019/20 equating to 17.2% of referrals being repeated within 12 months. This is a similar percentage to the re-referrals in 2018/19 (17.1%) and compares favourably with our statistical neighbours (19.9%) and national (22.6%) and regional averages (21.4%).

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	CSC 034	CSC 032	% of referrals that are re-referrals (monthly)
		Monthly number of re-referrals that are repeat within 12 months	% re-referrals that are repeat within 12 months (cumulative)	
	18%			
	Apr-19	20	19.4	19.4
	May-19	15	18.2	16.9
	Jun-19	11	16.4	12.5
	Jul-19	14	16.8	18.2
	Aug-19	25	19.3	29.8
	Sep-19	15	18.7	15.8
	Oct-19	12	18.4	16.4
	Nov-19	13	17.7	13.3
	Dec-19	18	18.7	31.6
ANNUAL TREND	Jan-20	9	18.2	12.3
	Feb-20	14	18.1	17.9
	Mar-20	5	17.2	6.5
	2016/17	314	21.4	
	2017/18	247	25.7	
	2018/19	205	17.1	
	2019/20	171	17.2	

CSC 032: % re-referrals that are repeat within 12 months (cumulative)



% of referrals that are re-referrals (monthly)



EARLY HELP ASSESSMENTS - STARTED

DEFINITION

The number of individual Early Help Assessments (EHA) started in month and year to date, including those initiated by external agencies. The start date of the EHA is taken from the form created date in Liquid Logic and the start date of the external EHA is taken from the contact date when the agency informed us of the EHA.

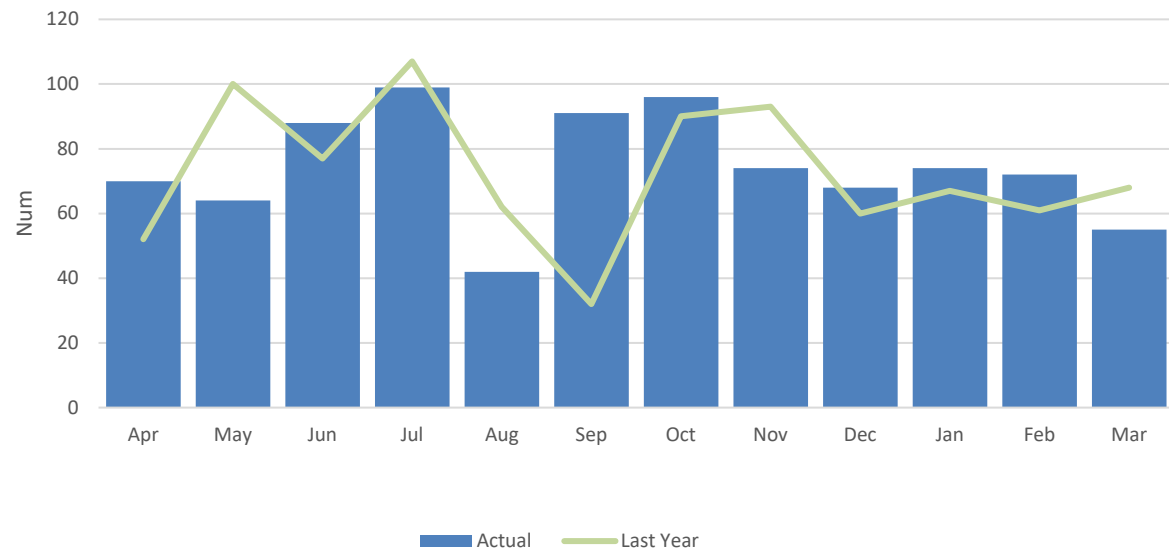
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

893 Early Help Assessment's (EHA) were started during 2019/20, which is an increase on the 869 started in 2018/19.

CSC 002

Total number of individual EHA's started in month (inc. external)

CSC 002: Total number of individual EHA's started in month (inc. external)



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE

Apr-19	70
May-19	64
Jun-19	88
Jul-19	99
Aug-19	42
Sep-19	91
Oct-19	96
Nov-19	74
Dec-19	68
Jan-20	74
Feb-20	72
Mar-20	55

ANNUAL TREND

2016/17	871
2017/18	877
2018/19	869
2019/20	893

MISSING EPISODES			
DEFINITION		The number of episodes of children going missing in Darlington, including Children in Care, Children in Care with another authority	
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS		The missing episodes for the Darlington CiC population is 17.7%. Where children are looked after by other authorities but cared for in Darlington, the ERASE Team have been alerted and provided with relevant information to ensure that the young people have been appropriately placed.	
		CSC 246	
		Number of missing episodes relating to Children in Care with DBC (children)	
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE		Ep.	Child.
		Apr-19	12
		May-19	19
		Jun-19	7
		Jul-19	15
		Aug-19	9
		Sep-19	7
		Oct-19	6
		Nov-19	9
		Dec-19	10
		Jan-20	9
		Feb-20	13
		Mar-20	13
ANNUAL TREND child counted once	2017/18		
	2018/19	199	36
	2019/20	129	24

ASSESSMENTS

DEFINITION

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

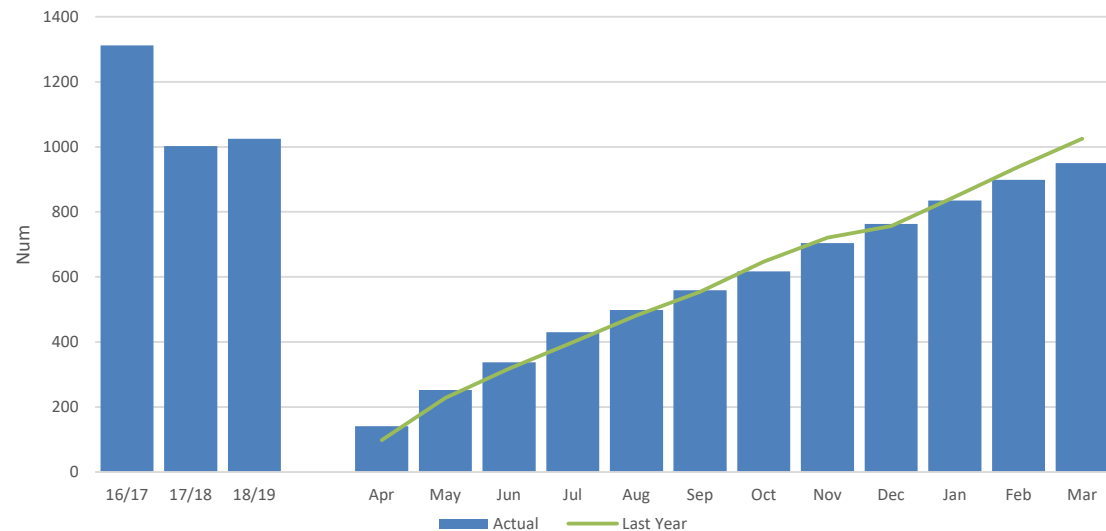
950 C&F assessments have been completed in total throughout the 2019/20 period, which is 7.3% decrease on the 1,025 completed throughout 2018/19. This has resulted in a 422.7 rate of C&F assessments completed per 10,000 of the 0 – 17 year population. This is below the national average of 539.3 and regional average of 686.6 as reported in the CiN census 2018/19.

CSC 036

Number of children & families assessments completed year to date

CSC 036: Number of children & families assessments completed year to date

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE		
	Apr-19	141
	May-19	252
	Jun-19	337
	Jul-19	430
	Aug-19	498
	Sep-19	559
	Oct-19	617
	Nov-19	704
	Dec-19	763
	Jan-20	835
	Feb-20	899
	Mar-20	950
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	1,312
	2017/18	1,002
	2018/19	1,025
	2019/20	950



ASSESSMENTS - TIMELINESS

DEFINITION	<p>Of those assessments completed in a period, the percentage completed within 45 working days. Day zero is the first working day on or after the start date of the referral, or strategy discussion decided to initiate S47 enquiries, or where new information indicates that an assessment should be undertaken. The end date is the first working day on or after the recorded date the Team Manager closes the single assessment.</p> <p>A process indicator as a proxy measure for improved child safety and how quickly services can respond when a child is thought to be at risk of serious harm. Local authorities should investigate and address concerns in a timely and efficient way.</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>88.7% of the Children & Families assessments were completed within 45 working days during the 2019/20 period, which is an increase from the same period last year (81.5%).</p> <p>The 88.7% rate of C&F assessments completed within timescale, brings Darlington in line with our statistical neighbour (87.1%) and above Regional (83.0%) and National (83.1%) averages as recorded for 2019 in the LAIT, although below our target of 90%.</p>

CSC 038
% C&F Assessments completed within 45 working days (Year to date)

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	90%
	Apr-19	84.4
	May-19	86.5
	Jun-19	88.1
	Jul-19	90.7
	Aug-19	91.4
	Sep-19	92.0
	Oct-19	92.4
	Nov-19	91.9
	Dec-19	90.4
	Jan-20	91.4
	Feb-20	89.2
	Mar-20	88.7
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	93.0
	2017/18	93.3
	2018/19	81.5
	2019/20	88.7

SECTION 47 - STARTED

DEFINITION

Number of Section 47 enquiries started monthly and year to date.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

484 Section 47 enquires were started during the 2019/20 period, which is a 25.1% decrease on the 646 that commenced in the 2018/19 period.

The rate of enquires started, as a result of this decrease, now equates to 216.2, which is above our statistical neighbour (184.7) and national average (168.3) although below the regional average (242.8) as recorded for 2019 in LAIT.

CSC 166

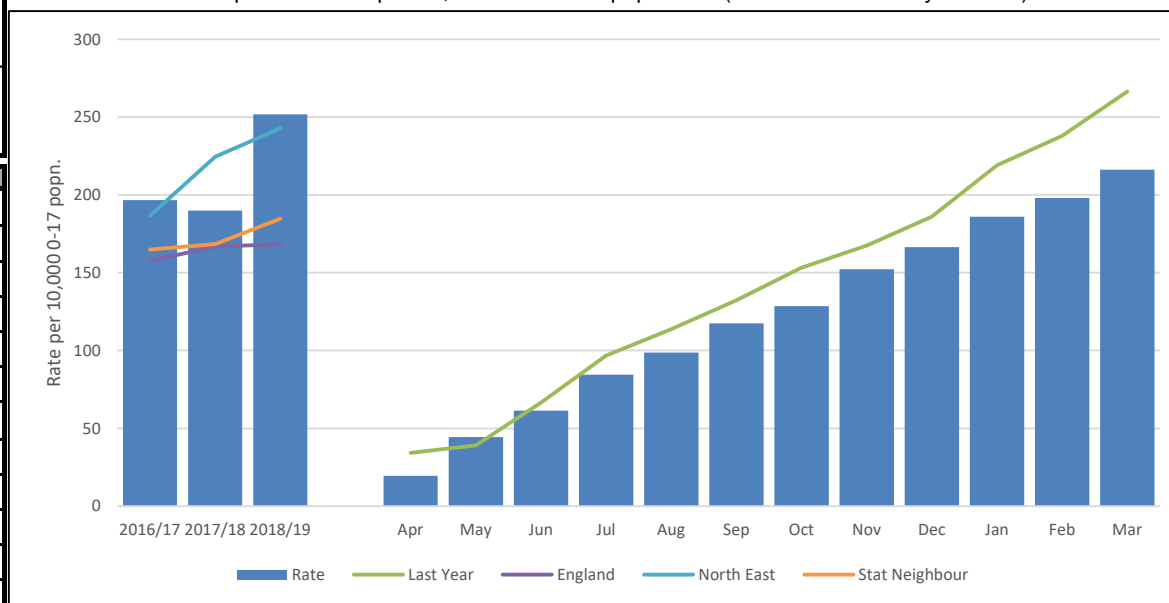
All children who had a section 47 enquires started in the month

CSC 164

Rate of Section 47 enquiries started per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (Cumulative)

Rate of section 47 enquiries started per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inc. children already on CPP)

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE			
	Apr-19	44	19.6
	May-19	56	44.5
	Jun-19	38	61.4
	Jul-19	51	84.5
	Aug-19	32	98.8
	Sep-19	42	117.5
	Oct-19	25	128.6
	Nov-19	52	152.2
	Dec-19	32	166.4
	Jan-20	44	186.0
	Feb-20	27	198.0
	Mar-20	41	216.2
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17		196.6
	2017/18	426	190.0
	2018/19	646	251.8
	2019/20	484	216.2



INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES - TIMELINESS

DEFINITION

Of those ICPC's held within the period (excluding transfer ins), the percentage held within 15 working days of the S47 enquiry. Provides an indication of how quickly the safety of children who are judged to be continuing to, or likely to suffer significant harm is being considered by a multi-agency meeting.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Of the 171 Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) that were held in 2019/20 (that were not transfer-in cases), 153 were in timescale (89.5%). Darlington's performance remains higher than our statistical neighbour (82.4%), regional (82.1%) and national averages (78.7%).

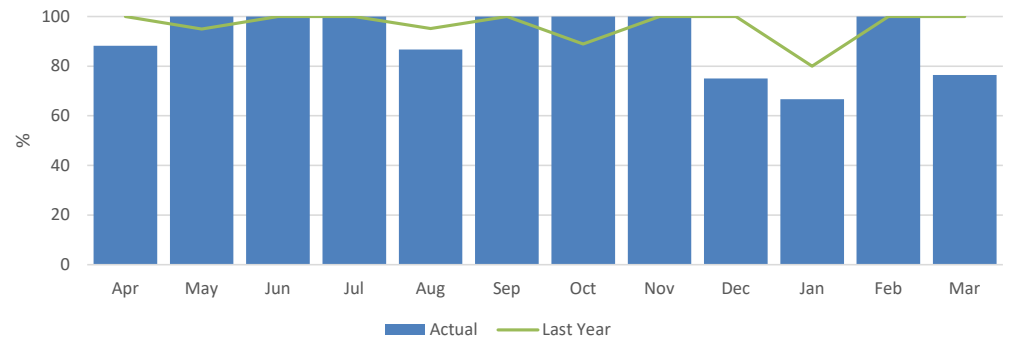
CSC 178

Monthly % of cases recorded in the Safeguarding Unit workbook where Child Protection strategy meeting / S47 start to initial child protection conference (ICPC) are within 15 days (CPP). Excludes transfer-in conferences.

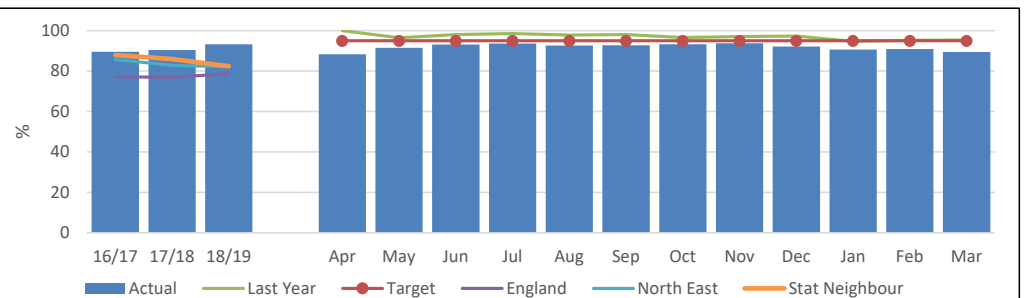
CSC 176

% of cases where the initial child protection conference (ICPC) was within 15 days of the initiating strategy discussion / S47 start recorded in the Safeguarding Unit workbook (CPP). This EXCLUDES transfer-in conferences. Year to Date

CSC 178: Monthly % of cases recorded in the Safeguarding Unit workbook where Child Protection strategy meeting / S47 start to initial child protection conference (ICPC) are within 15 days (CPP). Excludes transfer-in conferences.



CSC 176: % of cases where the initial child protection conference (ICPC) was within 15 days of the initiating strategy discussion / S47 start recorded in the Safeguarding Unit workbook (CPP). This EXCLUDES transfer-in conferences. Year to Date



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	100	95
	Apr-19	88.2	88.2
	May-19	100.0	91.6
	Jun-19	100.0	93.1
	Jul-19	100.0	93.6
	Aug-19	86.7	92.6
	Sep-19	100.0	92.8
	Oct-19	100.0	93.3
	Nov-19	100.0	93.8
	Dec-19	75.0	92.1
	Jan-20	66.7	90.6
	Feb-20	100.0	90.9
	Mar-20	76.5	89.5
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	100.0	100.0
	2017/18	95.0	95.0
	2018/19	95.4	95.4
	2019/20	76.5	89.5

CHILD PROTECTION

DEFINITION

Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at the end of the month.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

85 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) as at the end of March 2020. This is a 17.5% reduction when compared to March 2019 (103) and a 26.1% reduction compared with March 2018 (115).
Darlington currently has a 37.8% rate per 10,000 for children subject to a CPP which is lower than the regional average (63.1%), statistical neighbour (50.4%) and the national average (43.7%) as reported in the 2019 LAIT.

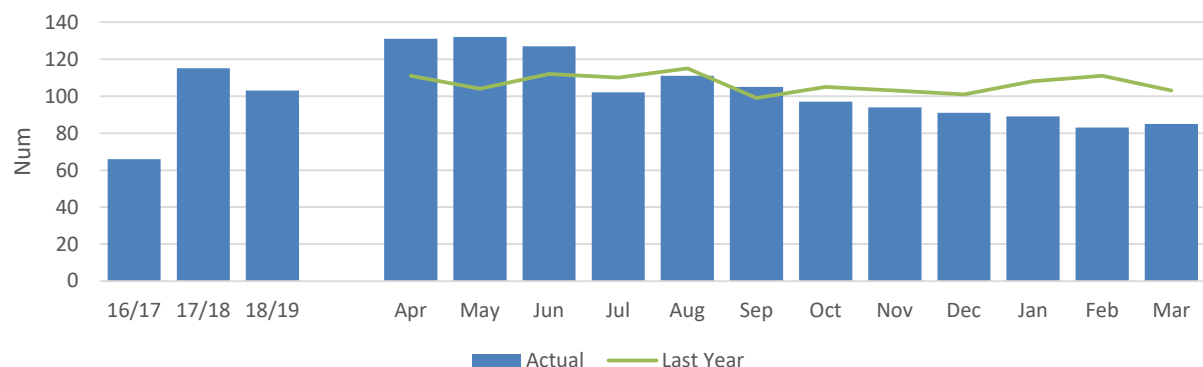
CSC 182

Number of children subject to a child protection plan

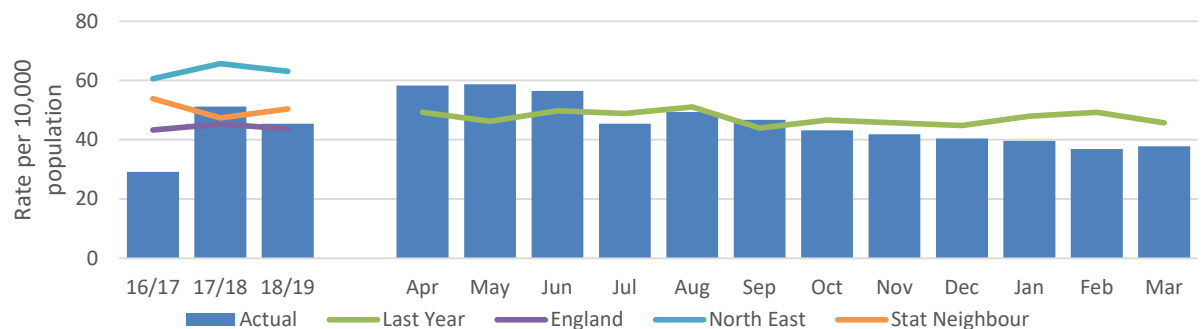
CSC 181

Rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 population

CSC 182: Number of children subject to a child protection plan



CSC 181: Rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 population



CHILD PROTECTION - ALLOCATION & REVIEWS

DEFINITION

The percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at the end of the month and who at that date had had a Plan continuously for at least the previous 3 months, whose case was reviewed within the required timescales.

Reviews are a key element in delivering Child Protection Plans and effective reviews should ensure the provision of good quality interventions. This indicator is a proxy for the measurement of effectiveness of the interventions provided to children subject to a Child Protection Plan. "Working Together to Safeguard Children" guidance requires that the first review should be within 3 months of the initial child protection conference and thereafter at intervals of no more than 6 months.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

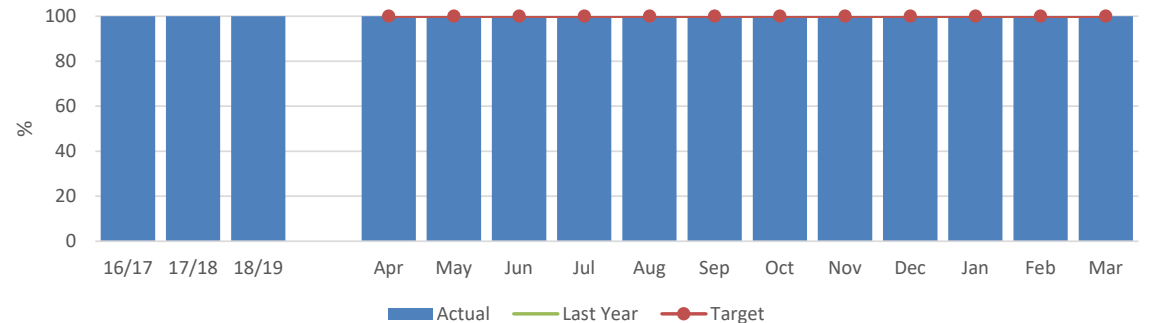
100% of Child Protection cases were allocated to a qualified social worker.

98.2% of Child Protection reviews have been completed within the required timescales which is similar to the 98.4% completed during 2018/19.

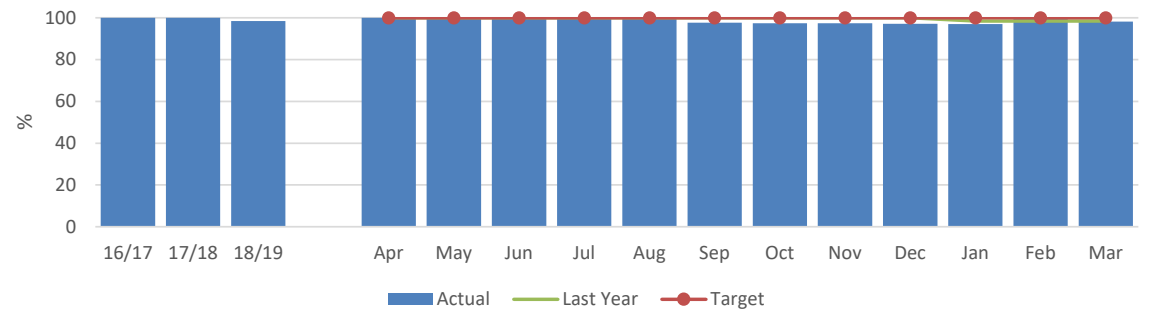
Darlington performance remains higher than statistical neighbours (94.2%), regional (92.7%) and national averages (91.8%) as reported in the 2019 LAIT.

		CSC 183	CSC 191
		% Child Protection cases allocated to a qualified Social Worker	% of Children who were subject of a child protection plan whose case was reviewed within the required timescales.
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	100	100
	Apr-19	100.0	100.0
	May-19	100.0	100.0
	Jun-19	100.0	100.0
	Jul-19	100.0	100.0
	Aug-19	100.0	100.0
	Sep-19	100.0	97.7
	Oct-19	100.0	97.4
	Nov-19	100.0	97.4
	Dec-19	100.0	97.1
	Jan-20	100.0	97.0
	Feb-20	100.0	100.0
	Mar-20	100.0	98.2
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	100.0	100.0
	2017/18	100.0	100.0
	2018/19	100.0	98.4
	2019/20	100.0	98.2

CSC 183: % Child Protection cases allocated to a qualified Social Worker



CSC 191: % of Children who were subject of a child protection plan whose case was reviewed within the required timescales.



CHILD PROTECTION - TIME PERIODS

DEFINITION

Percentage of children ceasing to be subject to a Child Protection Plan who had been subject to a Plan for 2 or more years, and percentage of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for the 2nd or subsequent time within a) 2 years of a previous plan, and b) with a previous plan at any point. These indicators reflect the underlying principle that professionals should be working towards specified outcomes which, if implemented effectively, should lead to all children not needing to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan within a maximum of two years, or becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.

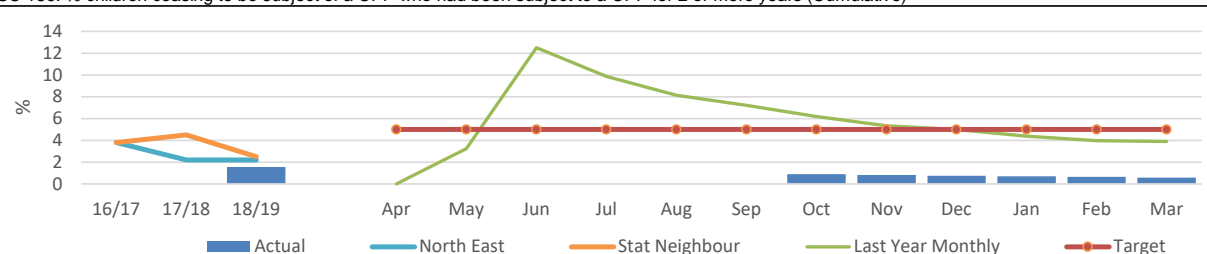
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

At the end of March 2020 the figure for children becoming subject to a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within 2 years of the previous plan ending was 3.2%.

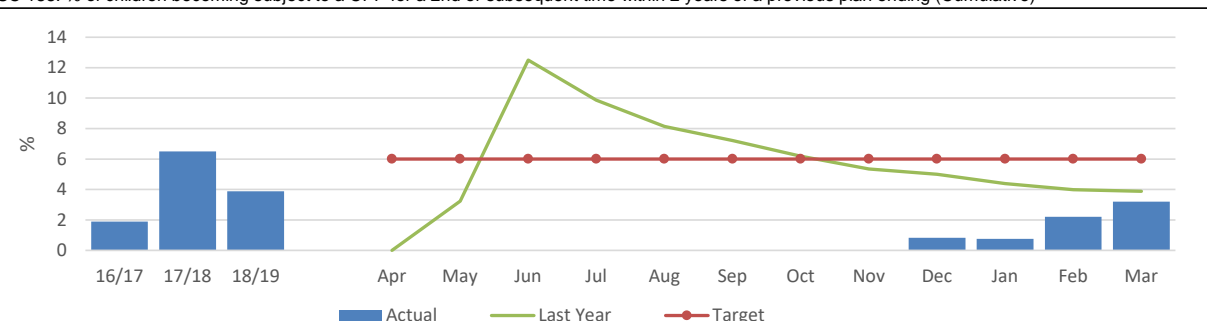
Year to date, 0.6% of children who had their plan ceased, had been subject to a CPP for 2 years or more. This continues to remain below the target of 5%.

		CSC 186	CSC 188
		% children ceasing to be subject of a CPP who had been subject to a CPP for 2 or more years (Cumulative)	% of children becoming subject to a CPP for a 2nd or subsequent time within 2 years of a previous plan ending (Cumulative)
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	5%	6%
	Apr-19	0.0	0.0
	May-19	0.0	0.0
	Jun-19	0.0	0.0
	Jul-19	0.0	0.0
	Aug-19	0.0	0.0
	Sep-19	0.0	0.0
	Oct-19	0.9	0.0
	Nov-19	0.8	0.0
	Dec-19	0.8	0.8
	Jan-20	0.7	0.8
	Feb-20	0.7	2.2
	Mar-20	0.6	3.2
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	0.0	1.9
	2017/18	0.0	6.5
	2018/19	1.6	3.9
	2019/20	0.6	3.2

CSC 186: % children ceasing to be subject of a CPP who had been subject to a CPP for 2 or more years (Cumulative)



CSC 188: % of children becoming subject to a CPP for a 2nd or subsequent time within 2 years of a previous plan ending (Cumulative)



CHILD PROTECTION - STATUTORY VISITS

DEFINITION

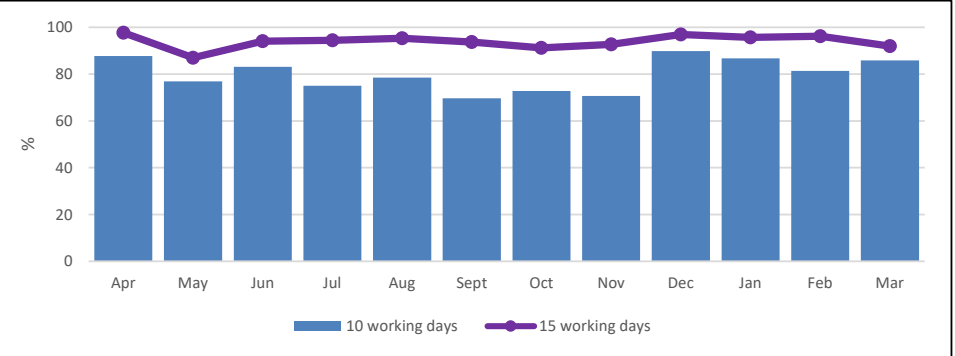
Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan who had all statutory visits carried out within timescales and percentage of Child Protection statutory visits completed within timescale monthly and year to date.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

79.6% (2,294/2,881) of Child Protection statutory visits were completed within 10 working days during 2019/20. The percentage of visits completed within 10 working days during 2019/20 was similar to the same period last year (79.3%).
93.8% (2,701/2,881) of the cumulative visits were completed within 15 working days during 2019/20.

CSC 252a		CSC 252b	
% Child Protection statutory visits completed within 10 working days within the month	% Child Protection statutory visits completed within 15 working days within the month	% Child Protection statutory visits completed within 10 working days year to date (cumulative)	% Child Protection statutory visits completed within 15 working days year to date (cumulative)

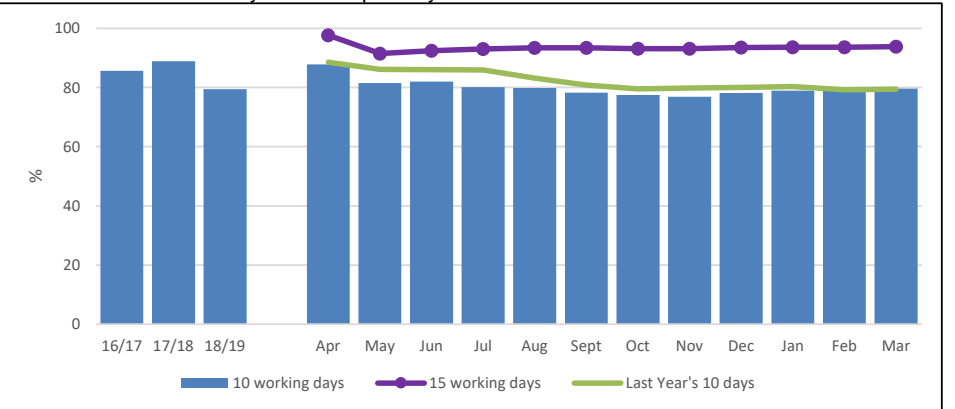
% Child Protection statutory visits completed within the month



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE

Target	90	90	90	90
Apr-19	87.8	97.7	87.8	97.7
May-19	77.0	87.0	81.5	91.5
Jun-19	83.2	94.1	82.0	92.4
Jul-19	75.0	94.5	80.2	93.0
Aug-19	78.5	95.3	79.9	93.4
Sep-19	69.7	93.7	78.2	93.4
Oct-19	72.8	91.2	77.5	93.1
Nov-19	70.6	92.8	76.8	93.1
Dec-19	89.9	96.5	78.2	93.4
Jan-20	86.8	95.7	79.0	93.6
Feb-20	81.4	96.2	79.1	93.9
Mar-20	85.9	92.0	79.6	93.8

% Child Protection statutory visits completed year to date



ANNUAL TREND

2016/17	85.6		85.6	
2017/18	88.9		88.9	
2018/19	79.3	95.7	79.3	95.7
2019/20	85.9	92.0	79.6	93.8

CHILDREN IN CARE

DEFINITION

Number of Children in Care at the end of each month.

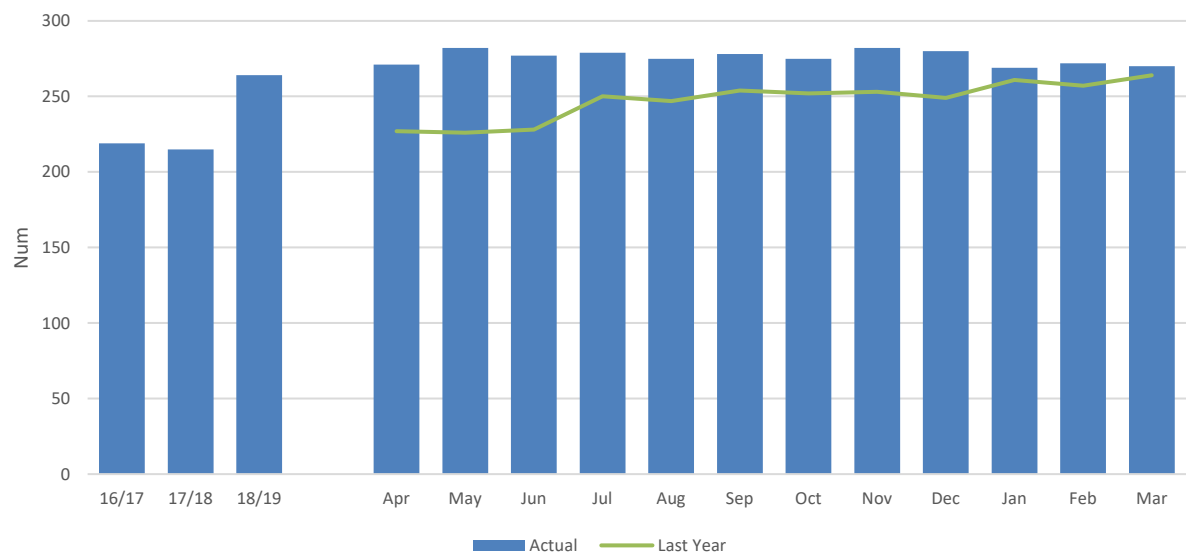
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

270 children are currently in care as at March 2020 which is similar to the number of children (264) that were in care as at March 2019.

CSC 201

Total number of Children in Care

CSC 201: Total number of Children in Care



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE

Target

Apr-19	271
May-19	282
Jun-19	277
Jul-19	279
Aug-19	275
Sep-19	278
Oct-19	275
Nov-19	282
Dec-19	280
Jan-20	269
Feb-20	272
Mar-20	270

ANNUAL TREND

2016/17	219
2017/18	215
2018/19	264
2019/20	270

CHILDREN IN CARE - ALLOCATION & REVIEWS

DEFINITION

The percentage of Children in Care cases which should have been reviewed during the year ending 31 March that were reviewed on time during the year and the percentage of Children in Care cases that were allocated to a qualified Social Worker at the end of the month.

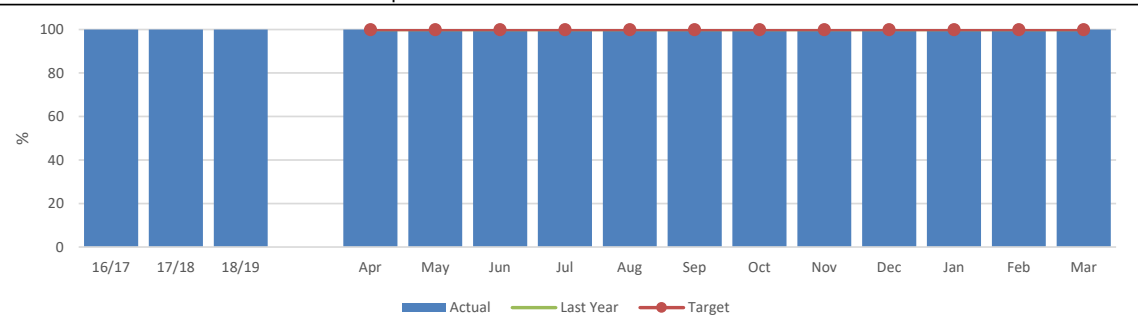
To improve compliance with local authorities' legal requirements under the Review of Children's cases Regulations 1991. The purpose of the review is to consider the plan for the child's welfare, to monitor the progress of the plan and amend it as necessary in light of changed information and circumstances. The statutory intervals are within 20 working days of placement, then within 3 months and 6 monthly thereafter, but reviews may be rescheduled or held inside these intervals if there are significant changes to the child's care plan.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

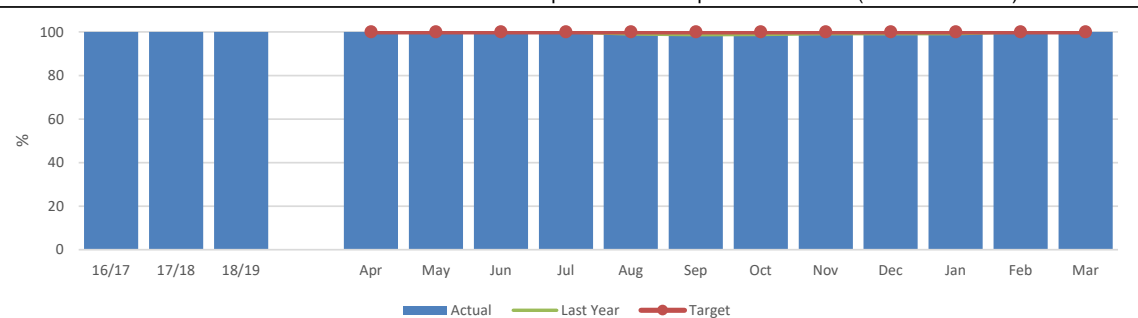
100% of Children in Care (CiC) are allocated to a qualified social worker.
All reviews during 2019/20, except 1 in February, have been completed within the required timescale.

		CSC 227	CSC 218
		% Children in Care allocated to a qualified Social Worker	% of Children in Care whose reviews had been completed within required timescales (as at month end)
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	100	100
	Apr-19	100.0	100.0
	May-19	100.0	100.0
	Jun-19	100.0	100.0
	Jul-19	100.0	100.0
	Aug-19	100.0	100.0
	Sep-19	100.0	100.0
	Oct-19	100.0	100.0
	Nov-19	100.0	100.0
	Dec-19	100.0	100.0
	Jan-20	100.0	100.0
	Feb-20	100.0	99.6
	Mar-20	100.0	100.0
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	100.0	88.0
	2017/18	100.0	100.0
	2018/19	100.0	100.0
	2019/20	100.0	100.0

CSC 227: % Children in Care allocated to a qualified Social Worker

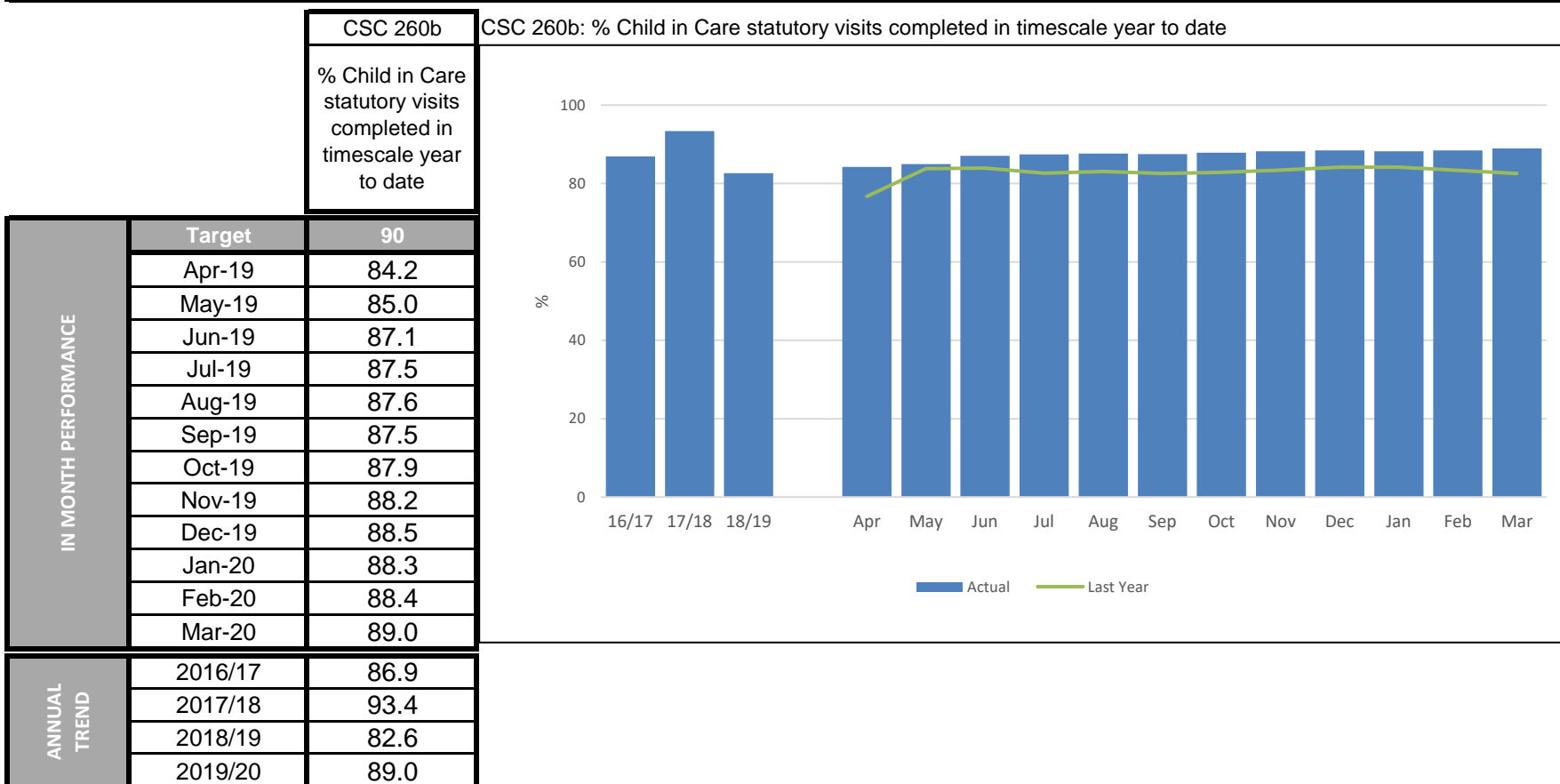


CSC 218: % of Children in Care whose reviews had been completed within required timescales (as at month end)



CHILDREN IN CARE - STATUTORY VISITS

DEFINITION	Percentage of Children in Care who had all statutory visits completed within required timescales and percentage of Children in Care's statutory visits completed within timescales year to date.
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	89.0% (3,075/3,456) of Child in Care (CiC) statutory visits have been completed in timescale during 2019/20. This is an increase on the 82.6% (2,389/2,893) CiC statutory visits completed in timescale during 2018/19. There has also been a 19.5% increase in the number of visits taking place from 2,893 during 2018/19 to 3,456.



CHILDREN IN CARE - PLACEMENTS

DEFINITION

Of those Children in Care at the point in time (excluding series of short-term placements), the percentage that had 3 or more separate placements in the previous 12 months; who had been in their current placement for 2 or more years. and who were placed more than 20 miles away from their home address.

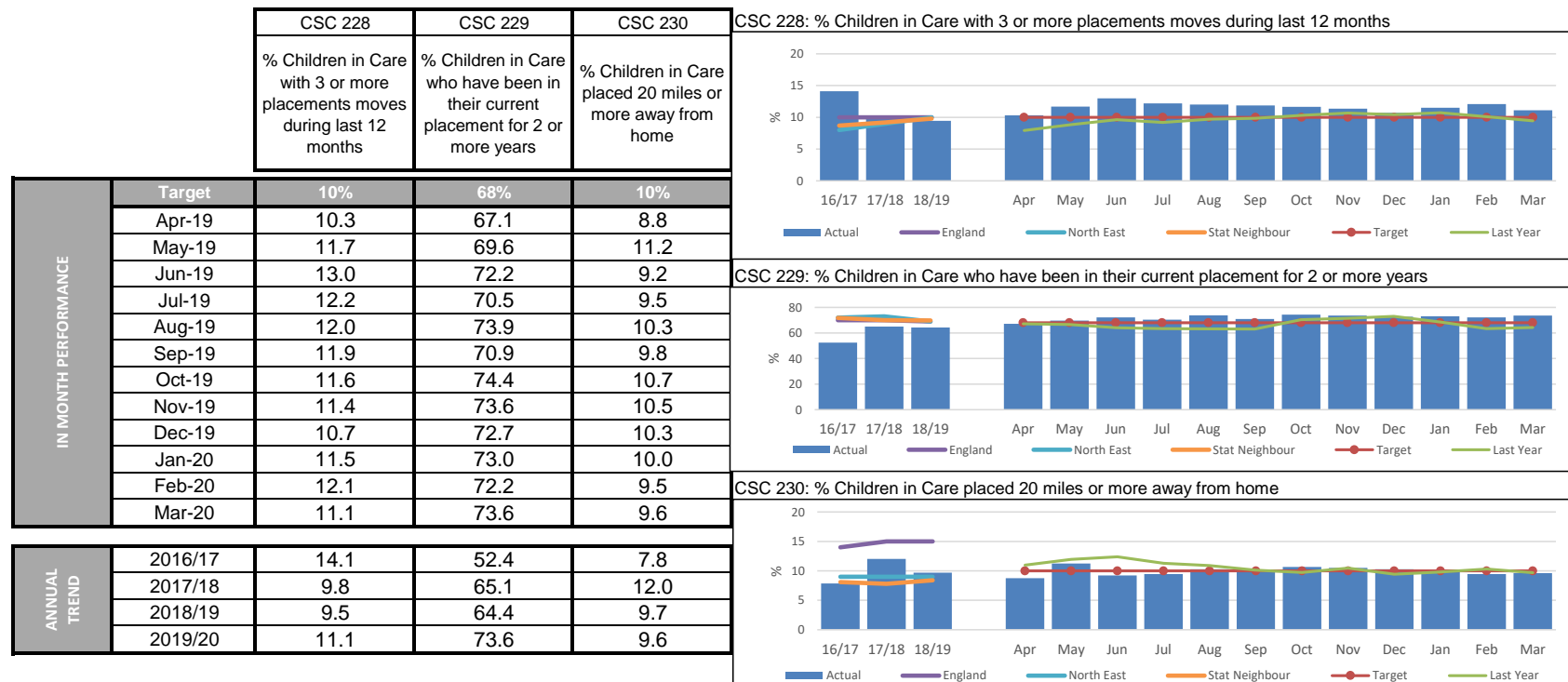
On the whole stability is associated with better outcomes; placement instability has been highlighted as a key barrier to improving educational outcomes. Proper assessment and an adequate choice of placements to meet the varied needs of different children are essential if appropriate stable placements are to be made. Inappropriate placements often break down and lead to frequent moves. Nevertheless, the circumstances of some individual children will require 3 or more separate placements during a year if they and others are to be kept safe.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

11.1% (30/270) of Children in Care (CiC) as at March 2020 have had 3 or more placements within the previous 12 months.

As at March 2020, 73.6% (67/91) of Darlington's CiC, aged under 16 (who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years), have been in their current placement continuously for at least 2 years. This is above the target of 68.0%, the national average (69.0), our statistical neighbours (69.8) and regional average (69.0).

9.6% of Darlington's CiC have been placed 20 or more miles away from home as at March 2020, which is similar to that in March 2019 (9.7%) and below target of 10.0%. All children who are placed over 20 miles away have placements that are confirmed as appropriate for the child, enabling them to have the best support either with family links or specialised care.



CHILDREN IN CARE - INITIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

DEFINITION

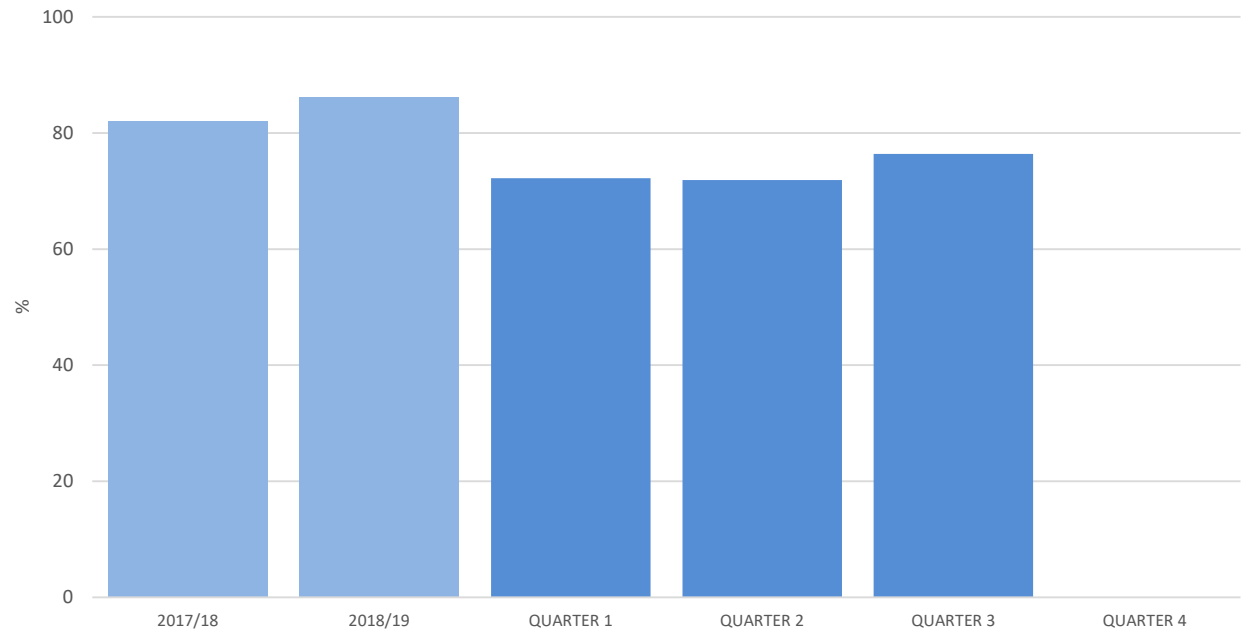
Percentage of Initial Health Assessments completed within 20 working days of a child coming into our care year to date (data from Health), and percentage of IHA forms returned to Health within 7 working days.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Health report a 76.4% completion of their health assessment within 20 working days during Q3. Awaiting Q4 data.

% Newly in to care with a completed Initial Health Assessment within 20 working days (from Health)

% Newly in to care with a completed Initial Health Assessment within 20 working days (from Health)



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE

Target	95
Apr-19	
May-19	
Jun-19	72.2
Jul-19	
Aug-19	
Sep-19	71.9
Oct-19	
Nov-19	
Dec-19	76.4
Jan-20	
Feb-20	
Mar-20	TBC

ANNUAL TREND

2016/17	54.0
2017/18	82.0
2018/19	86.2
2019/20	73.5%

CHILDREN IN CARE - HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

DEFINITION

Of the Children in Care (CiC) at 31 March who had been in care continuously for at least 12 months, the percentage who have had their Review Health Assessment (RHA) completed and the percentage who have an up to date Health Check.
Children in Care share many of the same health risks and problems as their peers, but often to a greater degree. These indicators track the participation of our Children in Care's health as a proxy for monitoring the general health and wellbeing of the children, as well as providing a check on the effectiveness of joint working with Health to secure good health outcomes for Children in Care.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

91.2% (177/194) of children due a review health assessment during the 2019/20 period had one completed, which is an improvement from 87.9% (March 2019), and is also above the target of 90%. Currently 3.1% of the young people are refusing to engage in their review health check, although they are continually reminded of the benefits of having a check up and encouraged to take part.

CSC 250

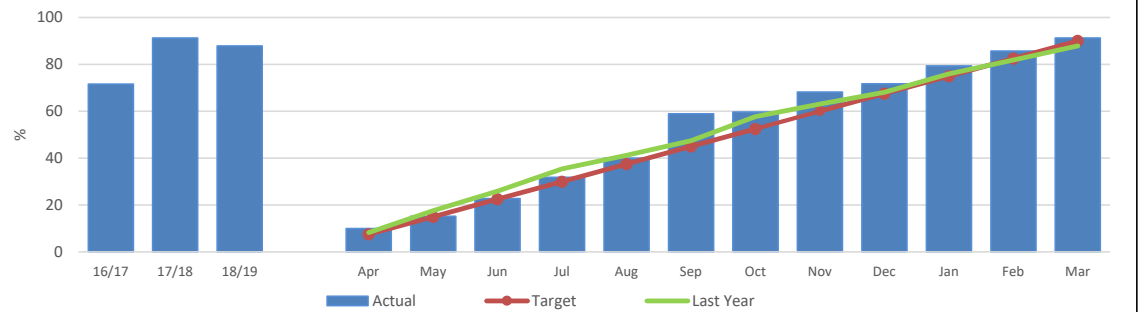
The % of CiC who have an up to date Health Checks (excludes any who will turn 18 before 31st March)

The % of CiC who were due a Review Health Check (year to date) who refused to engage

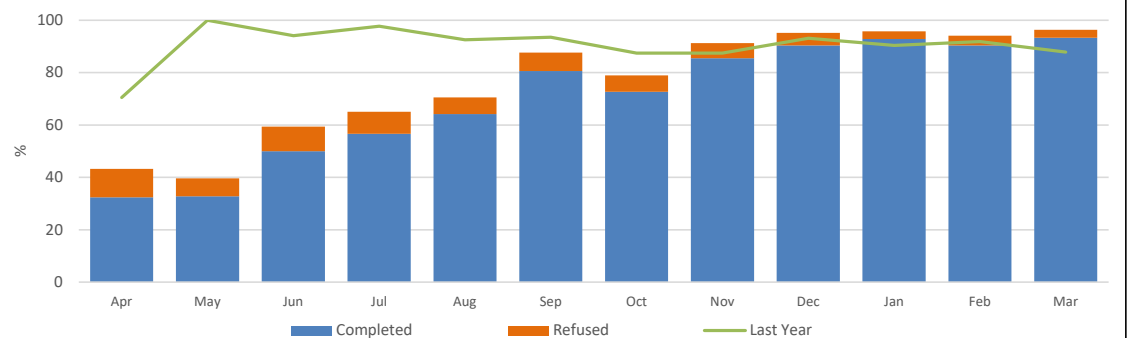
CSC 250b

The % of Children in Care who were due a Review Health Check year to date and were completed and recorded

CSC 250: % of CiC who are up to date for a Review Health Check at 31st March



CSC 250b: % of CiC due a Review Health Check during the year (to date) that have had one, and % that refused



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	90%		90%
	Apr-19	9.9	10.8	32.4
	May-19	15.3	6.9	32.8
	Jun-19	22.7	9.4	50.0
	Jul-19	31.9	8.4	56.6
	Aug-19	40.0	6.3	64.2
	Sep-19	58.9	7.1	80.6
	Oct-19	59.7	6.3	72.7
	Nov-19	68.1	5.8	85.5
	Dec-19	71.6	4.8	90.4
	Jan-20	79.3	3.0	92.8
	Feb-20	85.7	3.7	90.4
	Mar-20	91.2	3.1	93.3
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	71.6		
	2017/18	91.3		
	2018/19	87.9		87.9
	2019/20	91.2	3.1	93.3

CHILDREN IN CARE - DENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

DEFINITION

Of the Children in Care (CiC) at 31 March who had been in care continuously for at least 12 months, the percentage who had had their teeth checked by a dentist during the previous 12 months, and the percentage who had had an annual health check during the previous 12 months.

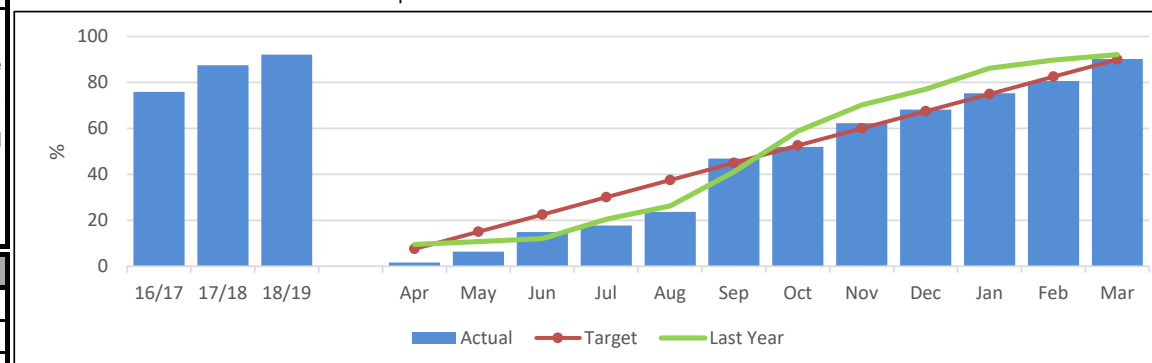
Children in Care share many of the same health risks and problems as their peers, but often to a greater degree. These indicators track the participation of our Children in Care with dental checks as a proxy for monitoring the general health and wellbeing of the children, as well as providing a check on the effectiveness of joint working with Health to secure good health outcomes for Children in Care.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

90.2% (175/194) of children due a dental check assessment had one completed. This is in line with our target of 90% although a decrease on the 92.1% completed during the 2018/19 period. However, there has been a 17.5% increase in checks completed. Currently 3.1% of the young people are refusing to engage in their review health check, although they are reminded of the benefit of having a check-up and encouraged to take part.

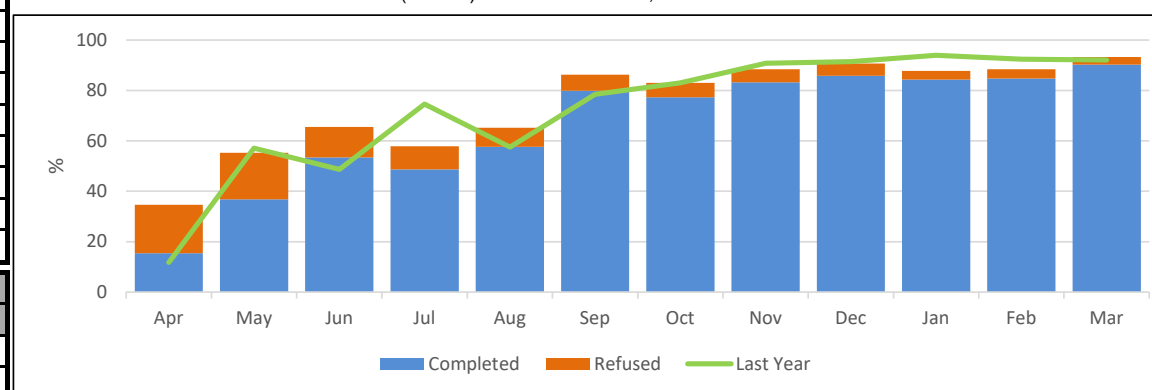
CSC 251		CSC 251d
The % of Children in Care with up to date Dental Checks (excludes any who will turn 18 before 31st March)	The % of Children in Care who were due a Dental Check (year to date) who refused to engage	The % of Children in Care who were due a Dental Check year to date and were up to date by the report date

CSC 251: % of Children in Care who are up to date for a Dental Check at 31st March



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	90%		90%
	Apr-19	1.7	19.2	15.4
	May-19	6.4	18.4	36.8
	Jun-19	14.9	12.1	53.5
	Jul-19	17.7	9.2	48.7
	Aug-19	23.6	7.6	57.6
	Sep-19	46.9	6.5	79.8
	Oct-19	51.9	5.7	77.3
	Nov-19	62.3	5.2	83.2
	Dec-19	68.2	4.9	85.8
	Jan-20	75.3	3.4	84.4
	Feb-20	80.6	3.7	84.7
	Mar-20	90.2	3.1	90.2
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	75.9		
	2017/18	87.5		
	2018/19	92.1		92.1
	2019/20	90.2	3.1	90.2

% of Children in Care due a Dental Check (to date) that have had one, and the % that refused



CARE LEAVERS

DEFINITION

The percentage of 'former relevant' care leavers aged 19-21 who were in suitable accommodation at their most recent contact, and the percentage who were not in employment, education or training at their most recent contact. Published data is included for comparison however data submitted to DfE by Local Authorities captures the young person's status around their 19th, 20th, or 21st birthday each year rather than the latest available information.

This measures accommodation and employment outcomes for young people formerly in care - a key group at risk of social exclusion. It is intended to increase the proportion of former care leavers who are in suitable accommodation and employment, education or training.

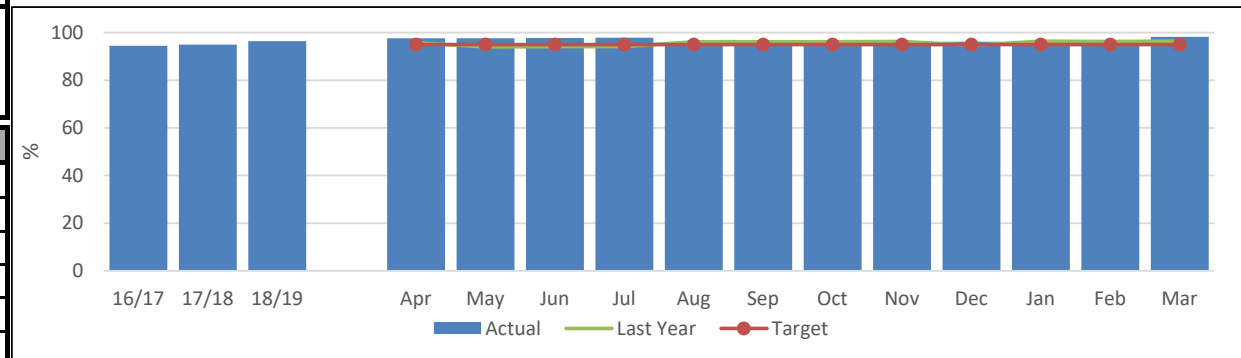
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

98.2% (56 out of 57) of care leavers in Darlington were in suitable accommodation at the end of March 2020. The young person not in suitable accommodation was due to them being in custody. This is above the target of 90% of the care leavers being in suitable accommodation and an improvement on the 96.4% as at March 2019.

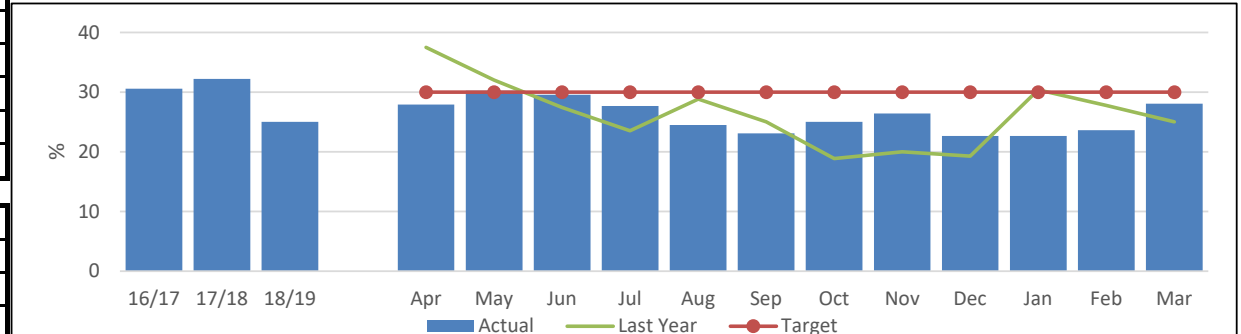
28.1% of care leavers (aged 19-21) were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at the end of March 2020, which is below the target of 30%. Of these, 12.3% were NEET due to disability or illness, a further 7.0% due to pregnancy or parenting and the remaining 8.8% for other circumstances.

		CSC 286	CSC 294
		% Care Leavers in suitable accommodation	% Care Leavers NEET
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Target	90%	30%
	Apr-19	97.7	27.9
	May-19	97.7	30.2
	Jun-19	97.8	29.6
	Jul-19	97.9	27.7
	Aug-19	95.9	24.5
	Sep-19	96.2	23.1
	Oct-19	96.2	25.0
	Nov-19	96.2	26.4
	Dec-19	96.2	22.6
	Jan-20	96.2	22.6
	Feb-20	96.4	23.6
	Mar-20	98.2	28.1
ANNUAL TREND	2016/17	96.4	30.6
	2017/19	94.9	32.2
	2018/19	96.4	25.0
	2019/20	98.2	28.1

CSC 286: % Care Leavers in suitable accommodation



CSC 294: % Care Leavers NEET



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

DESIGNATED OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the progress and performance of the Designated Officer, April 2019 to March 2020 and to highlight the required actions for April 2020 to March 2021.

Summary

2. In line with national guidance, the Designated Officer function is to ensure that:
 - (a) advice and guidance are provided to partner agencies and staff where an allegation is made against a person who works with children (paid or voluntary capacity).
 - (b) the Designated Officer will facilitate and oversee this process. The Designated Officer does not investigate. That is the role of the employer or if a criminal allegation, the Police.
 - (c) an agreed outcome of the investigation is established.
 - (d) allegations are appropriately managed by employers to protect not only the welfare of children but also staff.
 - (e) support actions are taken without delay to protect children.
 - (f) all learning is effectively disseminated.
4. All organisations working with children in Darlington are required to have policies and procedures in place on what their organisation should do when an allegation is made against an employee/volunteer who has contact with children. These policies and procedures should be in line with Darlington Safeguarding Partnership multi-agency procedures.
6. The allegation can be in connection with:
 - (a) employment
 - (b) voluntary activity
 - (c) work placement
 - (d) the individual's own children
 - (e) related to the community or private life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that:

- (a) the contents of the report and the work undertaken during 2019/20 and the priorities of the Designated Officer service for 2020/21 be noted.
- (b) the annual report be agreed.
- (c) all agencies to consider how to promote the role of the Designated Officer within their own organisation.

Suzanne Joyner
Director of Children and Adult Services

Designated Officer Annual Report 2019/20

Managing allegations and concerns against staff, carers or volunteers

Contents

- 1. Purpose of report**
- 2. Introduction / National Context**
- 3. Local Arrangements**
- 4. Cross boundary issues**
- 5. Referrals**
- 6. Area of Concern**
- 7. Source of Referrals by Profession / employment setting**
- 8. Allegations by staff group**
- 9. Outcomes of cases**
- 10. Performance**
- 11. Freedom of Information Requests**
- 12. Service Improvements & Developments 2019/20**
- 13. Designated Officer Service Priorities and Plan 2020/21**
- 14. Recommendations**
- 15. References**
- 16. Author**

Appendices

Appendix 1	Service Improvements & Developments 2019/20
Appendix 2	Designated Officer Service Priority Plan 2020/21

Designated Officer Annual Report 2019/20

Managing Allegations and Concerns against Staff, Carers or Volunteers.

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership on the progress and performance of the Designated Officer (DO) service, (previously known as the Local Authority Designated Officer LADO) between April 2019 and March 2020 and to highlight the required actions for April 2020 to March 2021.

2.0 Introduction / National Context

- 2.1 The framework for the management of allegations of abuse is set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children \(July 2018\)](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges \(September 2018\)](#).

In line with the guidance, the Designated Officer function is required to ensure that:

- advice and guidance are provided to partner agencies and staff.
 - any allegation made against a person who works with children in either a paid or a voluntary capacity is investigated. The Designated Officer will facilitate and oversee this process to conclusion. The Designated Officer does not investigate. That is the role of the employer or if a criminal allegation, the Police.
 - Designated Officer meetings are chaired effectively, and an agreed outcome of the investigation is established.
 - allegations are appropriately managed by employers to protect not only the welfare of children but also staff.
 - support actions are taken without delay to protect children.
 - learning from Designated Officer referrals is effectively disseminated.
- 2.3 All organisations within Darlington are required to have clear policies and procedures in place that outline how and what their organisation should do when an allegation is made against an employee/volunteer who has contact with children. These policies and procedures should be in line with Darlington Safeguarding Partnership procedures.

- 2.4 The criterion for a Designated Officer referral is when a person is alleged to have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child.
- has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

The allegation can be in connection with employment / voluntary activity / work placement, regarding individual's own children or related to the community or private life of a partner / member of the family / household member.

3.0 Local Arrangements

- 3.1 Between March-October 2019 the role of Designated Officer was undertaken by an agency worker. Darlington Borough Council currently has one Designated Officer who is based with the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit and has undertaken the role since November 2019. The current Designated Officer has a dual role and is also a Policy Development Officer within the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit.
- 3.2 Clear arrangements are in place to ensure robust oversight and monitoring of the Designated Officer function. This has been provided through supervision with the Assistant Director of Adult Services to ensure that policies are applied consistently and fairly and that all cases are progressed in a timely manner.
- 3.3 During 2019/20 consideration has been given to whether the Designated Officer role should be located within the Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit structure. This issue is still in discussion and options for the future are being considered.

4.0 Cross boundary issues

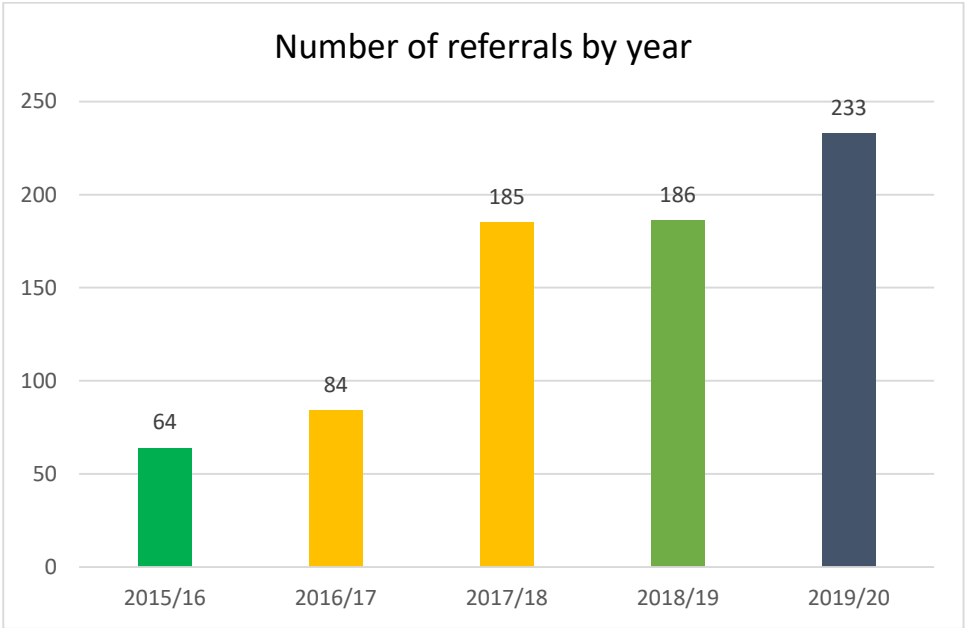
- 4.1 Where a child from the Darlington Local Authority area makes an allegation in a setting or placement which is outside the Darlington Borough Council jurisdiction, the lead responsibility for action lies with the local authority for the area where the alleged abuse occurred.
- 4.2 In these circumstances, the Designated Officer and, where appropriate, the child's Social Worker, will liaise with the relevant local authority and agree a joint strategy.
- 4.3 Checks should be made as to whether there are any other children in the placement. If so, the child's Social Worker and manager must be informed, and the Designated Officer should consult them about the action required.
- 4.4 Interviews of children from Darlington Local Authority areas will usually be undertaken by their own local children's social care services in conjunction with the police as appropriate.

4.5 Where the referral relates to a child from another local authority temporarily placed in an establishment located within the Darlington Local Authority area, the Designated Officer should liaise with the child’s home authority about the roles and responsibilities in carrying out this procedure.

5.0 Referrals

5.1 In 2019/20, the Designated Officer service received a total of 233 referrals This represents a 25% increase on the number of referrals received in 2018/19. Of the total number of referrals, 47 were determined to meet the Designated Officer threshold for an Initial Evaluation Meeting amounting to 20% of all referrals. The remaining 186 referrals did not meet this threshold.

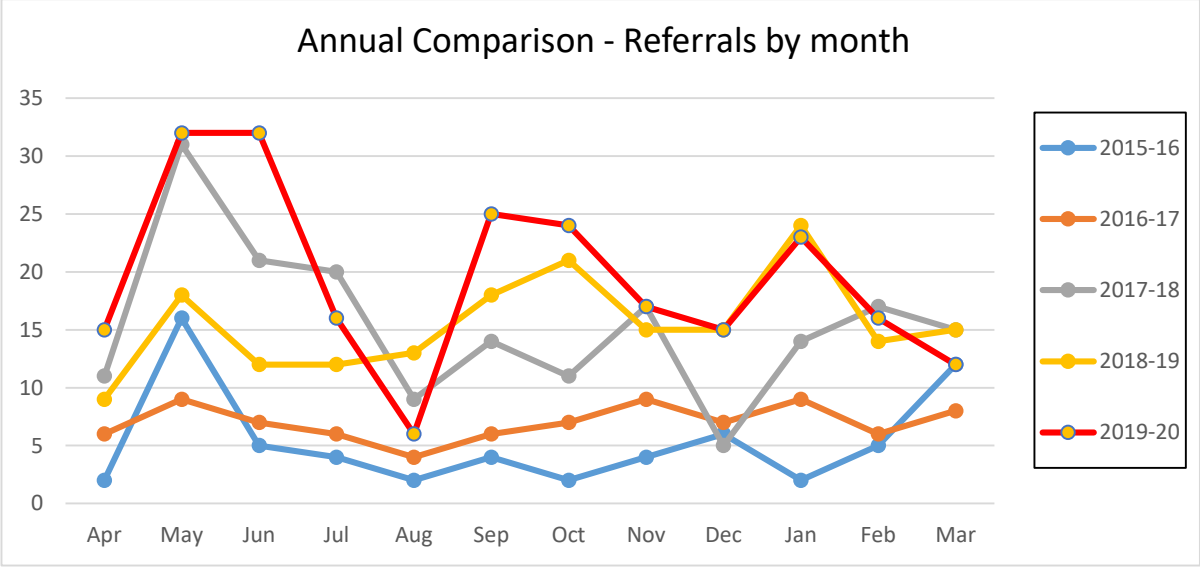
Chart 1



- 5.2 Initial Evaluation Meetings take place when it is clear that information sharing would be beneficial between agencies involved, for example Designated Safeguarding leads within the referring organisation, Human Resources, Police, and Children’s Services. This can be after a strategy meeting held by Children’s Services or it may be a standalone meeting. In some circumstances it is appropriate to share information via telephone without the need of convening an Initial Evaluation Meeting, for example when the allegation is not of a serious nature and there is limited information to share with the employer.
- 5.3 The figures in Chart 2 show that the referral rate in 2019/20 increased by a total of 47 referrals. The chart also shows that in June 2019 the referral rate increased significantly in comparison with previous years with a total of 31 referrals.
- 5.4 Analysis shows that 47% of the referrals in June 2019 were made in respect of schools which provide a service for children with Special Educational Needs and of the total number of referrals in June 2019 a total of 38% were in respect of one school.

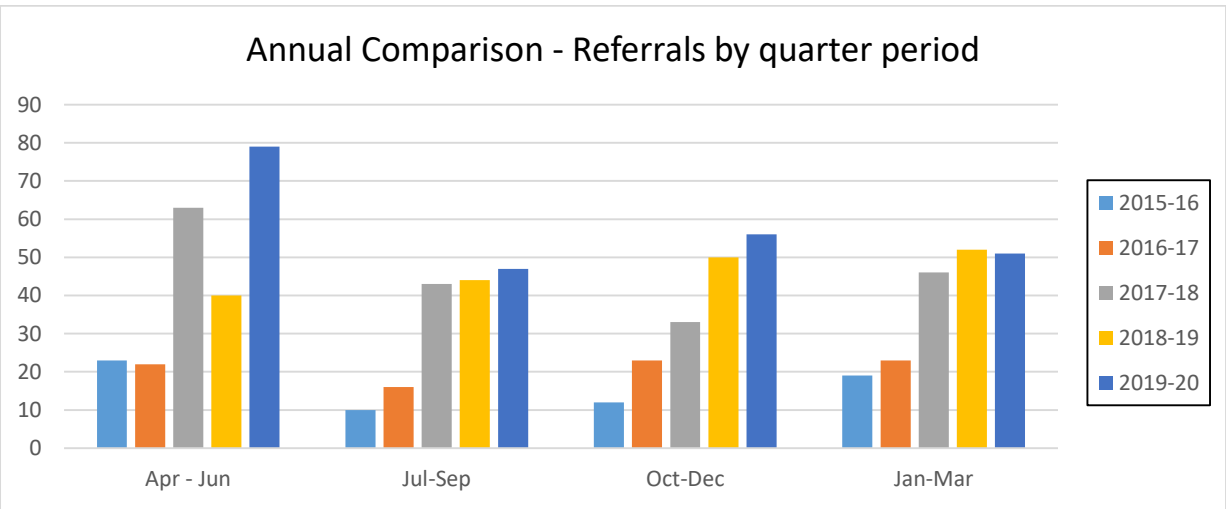
- 5.5 There were similar numbers in May 2019 (this is not dissimilar to the pattern of previous years) and Quarter 1 for this year has a significantly higher rate of referrals than the remaining quarters of 2019/20 (Chart 3). The higher number of referrals may in part be explained by the fact that children with Special Educational Needs are often unsettled by breaks in routine and the number of incidents involving the use of restraint (which is the predominant reason for allegations in these settings) may have increased following the return to school after the Easter break and the May Bank holiday half term.

Chart 2



- 5.4 The majority of referrals to the Designated Officer relate to schools. Increases in the rate of referrals can be seen in September 2019 and January 2020 when children return to school following the lengthy summer and Christmas breaks. The number of referrals tends to fall significantly in the month of August during the summer break.

Chart 3



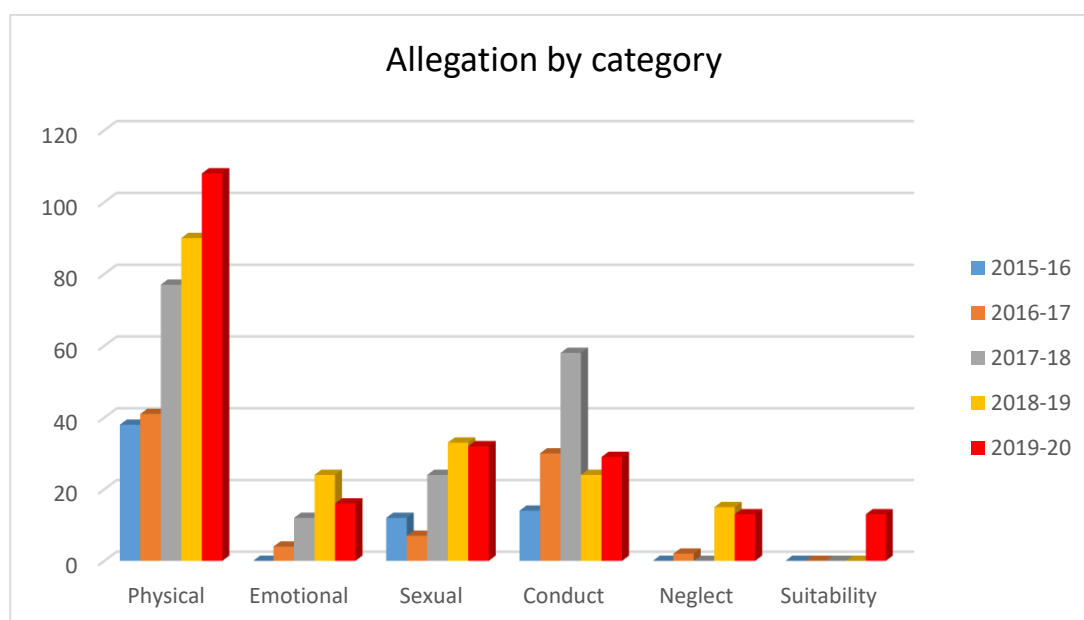
6.0 Category of Concern

- 6.1 Of the 233 referrals accepted in 2019/20 the main category for referral was allegations of physical abuse. This is in line with the data from previous years.
- 6.2 In 2019/20 107 (46%) of accepted referrals were in relation to physical abuse which represents an increase of 20% on last year's figures within this category.
- 6.3 As can be seen from chart 4, the rate of referrals of allegations of sexual abuse has remained the same as last year at 32. This represents 14% of all cases referred and a slight percentage decrease on last year. The Local Authority and Darlington Safeguarding Partnership provide a wide range of safeguarding training for professionals and includes both adult and children's safeguarding and a multi-agency audit on sexual abuse in accordance with JTAI was conducted by the Partnership in 2019/20.
- 6.4 The number of referrals under the category of neglect has remained constant with a total of 13 representing 6% of the total number of referrals. Throughout 2019/20 the Local Authority and Darlington Safeguarding Partnership provided a rolling programme of Neglect workshops to raise awareness of this category of abuse.
- 6.5 There has been a slight decrease in the number of emotional abuse referrals with a total of 16 recorded in 2019/20. Emotional abuse referrals represent 7% of all referrals to Designated Officer.
- 6.6 Referrals under the category 'conduct' have seen a slight increase accounting for 29 (12%) of referrals to the Designated Officer in 2019/20. The use of conduct as an area of concern is not included in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 but is widely used by Designated Officers as some referrals do not fit neatly into the four categories of physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. There has been on-going discussion regionally as to which Local Authorities are still using this category. The outcome and recommendations have been considered at the national quarterly Designated Officer meeting and a decision made that it was the responsibility of the individual Local Authorities whether the term conduct is used. The majority of referrals received recorded as 'conduct' were in relation to incidents which occurred in the private lives of individuals and did not easily fit into the main categories.
- 6.7 A number of allegations (13) have been recorded under the new category of 'suitability' and this category amounts to 6% of the total. This category usually relates to an employee's personal issues, such as mental ill-health or 'association' with an offender, which may affect their suitability to work with children.
- 6.8 The remaining recorded allegations have not been categorised because they are recorded for information purposes, for example, in support of employers seeking advice and reassurance but requiring a record of the referral to the Designated Officer to satisfy Ofsted requirements, providing additional information about a

case which has already been investigated or because the allegation is subsequently found to be 'out of area' and referred to the relevant local authority.

- 6.9 The overall trend within the Designated Officer service is that the number of annual referrals has increased significantly (20%) in the past twelve months. Some referrals are complex, often requiring more than one Designated Officer meeting. There have also been referrals relating to incidents in the private lives of individuals, which raise safeguarding concerns about their suitability within their employment. Such cases can be complex in terms of disclosure and resolution.
- 6.10 The increase in the total number of referrals in this reporting period is partly explained by the high number of allegations from a school for children with Special Educational Needs, accounting for 19% of the total number of allegations. Most of the allegations from this setting relate to the use of restraint. This is explained in paragraphs 8.4 - 8.6.
- 6.11 The increase in the total number of referrals in 2019/20 may also be explained in part by the impact of multi-agency training provided by the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Training Officer and awareness raising sessions provided by the Designated Officer in 2019/20, which has resulted in a better understanding of the role of the Designated Officer and the requirement for employers to inform the relevant Local Authority of allegations against professionals who work with children.

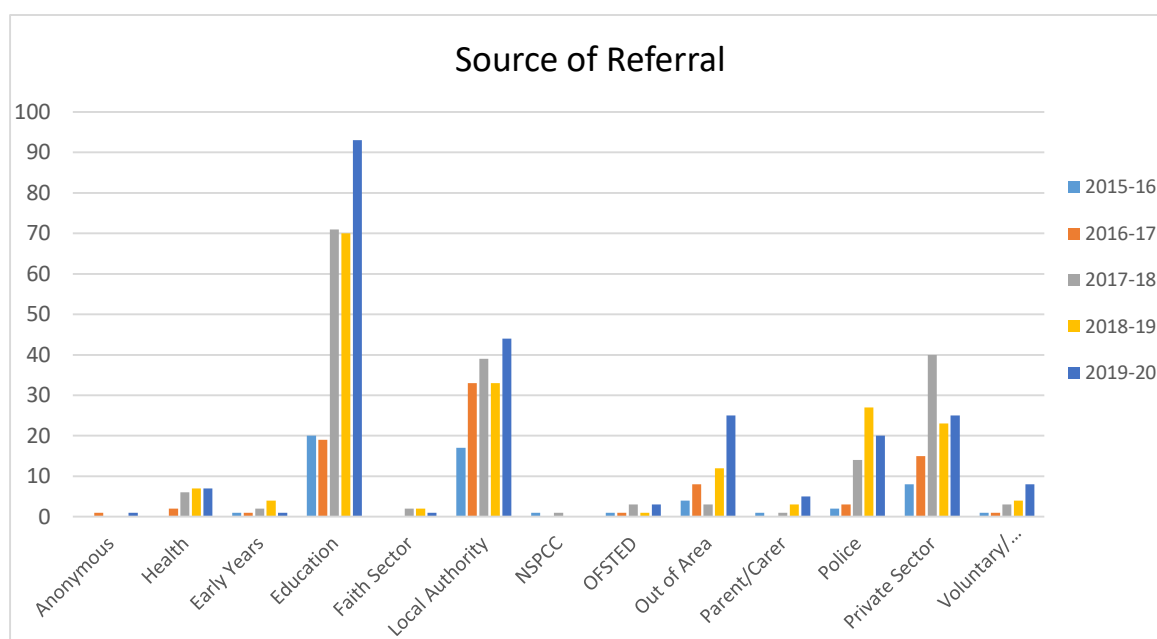
Chart 4



7.0 Source of Referrals by Profession / employment setting

- 7.1 As can be seen in Chart 5 Education settings in 2019/20 continue to be the largest referring group, accounting for 93 (40%) of the 233 referrals made. The majority of referrals from schools were as a result of allegations of physical abuse and correspond to the analysis of 'category of concern' data showing that physical abuse is the most common category of allegation reported to the Designated Officer. It should be noted that the total number of allegations relating to education establishments is slightly higher at 98 and this is because five of the allegations involving an employee in education were referred to the Designated Officer by other agencies or a parent/carer.
- 7.2. The Designated Officer has continued in 2019/20 to liaise with the North East Ecumenical Safeguarding Group to ensure that interaction and engagement between the faiths continues to share an understanding of the safeguarding roles and responsibilities within each church and the cross border issues faced as well as to raise awareness of the Designated Officer role. The North East Ecumenical Board have revised their schedule of quarterly meetings and will include an invitation to all North East Designated Officers.

Chart 5

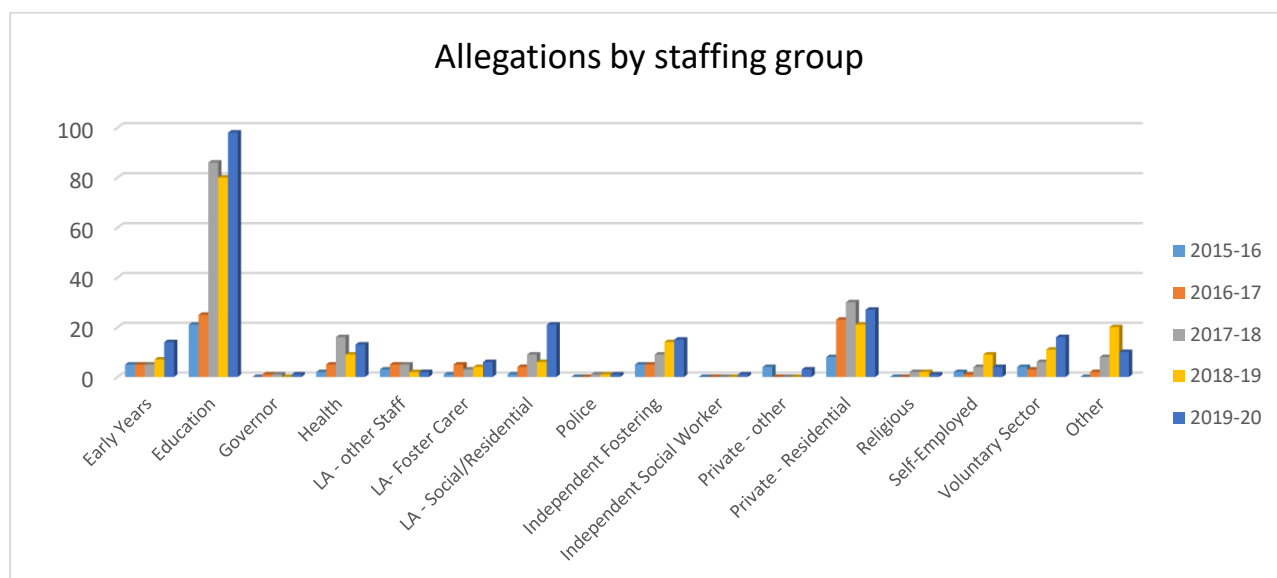


- 7.3 Referrals have continued to be received from a wide range of professions / Settings.

8.0 Allegations by staff group

- 8.1 The Chart 6 shows that referrals are made across a wide range of roles and settings, whether paid staff or volunteers as outlined in the national guidelines.

Chart 6



- 8.2 As would be expected the largest number of allegations by staffing groups is Education which accounts for 98 referrals which is 42% of all allegations referred to the Designated Officer in 2019/20.
- 8.3 During 2019/20, of the 98 referrals relating to employees in education settings, 12 (12%) were regarding employees from primary schools; 8 (8%) from secondary schools; 6 (6%) from Further Education settings; 1 (1%) from a residential establishment with attached education provision and 71 (72%) were from schools which provide a service for children with Special Educational Needs (both primary and secondary age groups).
- 8.4 There was a total of 53 allegations (54%) in the category of physical abuse relating to schools and this figure correlates with the presenting referrals from education, often involving physical restraints being used within educational settings for example Team Teach, which is an approved management model for dealing with children and young people who are posing a risk to themselves or others .
- 8.5 One school which has an intake of pupils who are unable to have mainstream education because of Special Educational Needs and challenging behaviour made a total of 44 referrals (all categories) to the Designated Officer in 2019/20. This represents 19% of the total number of referrals (all categories) to the Designated Officer originating from one educational establishment. Of these referrals a total of 34 involved allegations of physical abuse, accounting for 62% of the referrals from Education within the category of physical abuse. All 34 referrals involved allegations of assault or the excessive use of force during physical interventions and restraint.
- 8.6 The high number of referrals from this school was analysed by the Designated Officer. Whilst there is clearly evidence of transparency in reporting allegations to the Designated Officer and adherence to local reporting procedures, concerns

about the high number of allegations relating to the use of restraint have been escalated to the Head of Education at Darlington Borough Council.

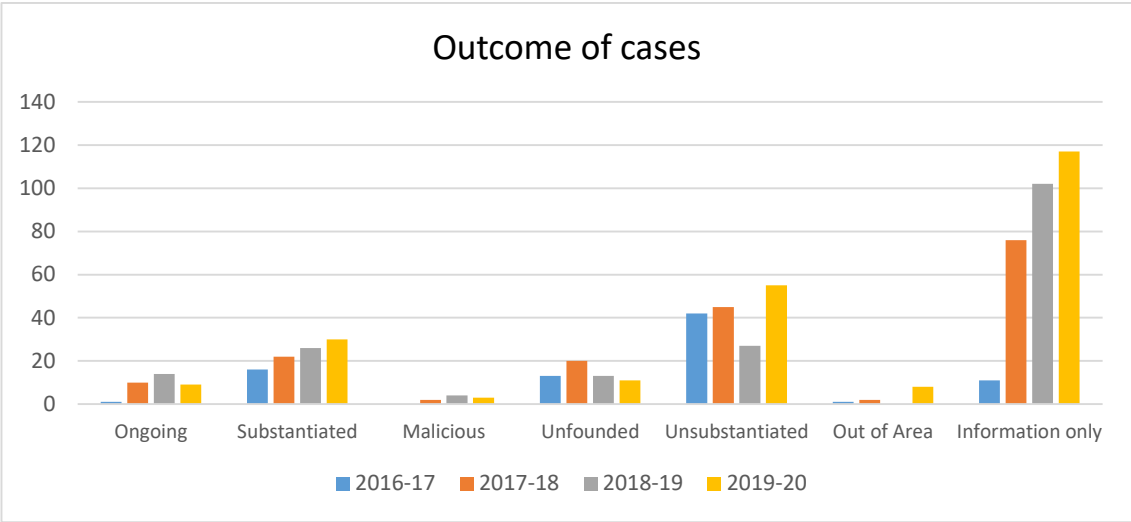
- 8.7 The number of referrals regarding Independent Foster Carers has increased with 15 allegations being referred during 2019/20. There have been 6 referrals relating to Darlington Borough Council Foster Carers during the recording period, a slight increase on last year's figures.
- 8.8 The Designated Officer continues works closely with the Service Manager for the Fostering Team following a decision in 2018 that all referrals about foster carers (i.e. including Independent Fostering Agencies) would be shared with the Service Manager. This enables the Service Manager to keep a close check on those agencies where the standards of care fall below what is expected of an accredited provider of services. When appropriate this information is shared with the Commissioning Team.

9.0 Outcome of cases

- 9.1 In relation to the 30 cases where the allegations were substantiated, of these cases 7 employees were dismissed (23%), 4 resigned from their position (13%), 2 cases resulted in no further action (7%), 12 staff members were reinstated (40%), 1 staff member was de-registered (3%) and 3 received management advice following disciplinary proceedings (10%). One case (3%) was recorded as substantiated following agreement at the Initial Evaluation Meeting because of the weight of evidence from the outset, but this case is still awaiting the outcome of the police investigation and therefore the disposal is not yet recorded.
- 9.2 There were 55 unsubstantiated outcomes and of these 25 staff were re-instated (45%) and 21 resulted in no further action (38%). In the remaining cases employees were given management advice.
- 9.3 There were 11 cases deemed to be 'unfounded', of these 3 staff were re-instated (27%) and in 8 cases no further action was taken (73%).
- 9.4 A total of 3 cases were deemed to be malicious. No further action was taken in 2 (67%) of these cases no further action was taken and in 1 case (33%) the employee was reinstated following an internal investigation.
- 9.4 In this reporting period 125 cases were recorded for 'information only'. This includes cases which are 'out of area' (sometimes this fact is only established after initial enquiries have been carried out by the Designated Officer), cases which are reported to the Designated Officer but are subsequently found not to be in the remit of the Designated Officer procedures and result in advice being given and cases which are transferred to the Safeguarding Adult Manager as they are better dealt with under the Managing Allegations Procedures in accordance with the Care Act 2014. Some cases can fall within the remit of both the Designated Officer and the Safeguarding Adult Manager, for example agency employees or employees with two roles. In such cases, the Designated Officer works closely with the Safeguarding Adult Manager and a joint meeting may take place.

- 9.5 A total of 9 cases (4%) remain open. These are either on-going Police investigations, complex internal investigations or cases which are awaiting the outcome of a court case or an appeal.

Chart 7



10.0 Performance

- 10.1 The Designated Officer continues to work to the professional standards set out in Working Together. The performance of the Designated Officer is measured and monitored through supervision between the Assistant Director of Adult Services and the Designated Officer.
- 10.2 The number of Designated Officer referrals that progressed through to an Initial Evaluation meeting was 47 (20%). This represents a 34 % increase in Initial Evaluation Meetings in comparison with 2018/19.

Local targets are set in line with an earlier version of Working Together (2010) that:

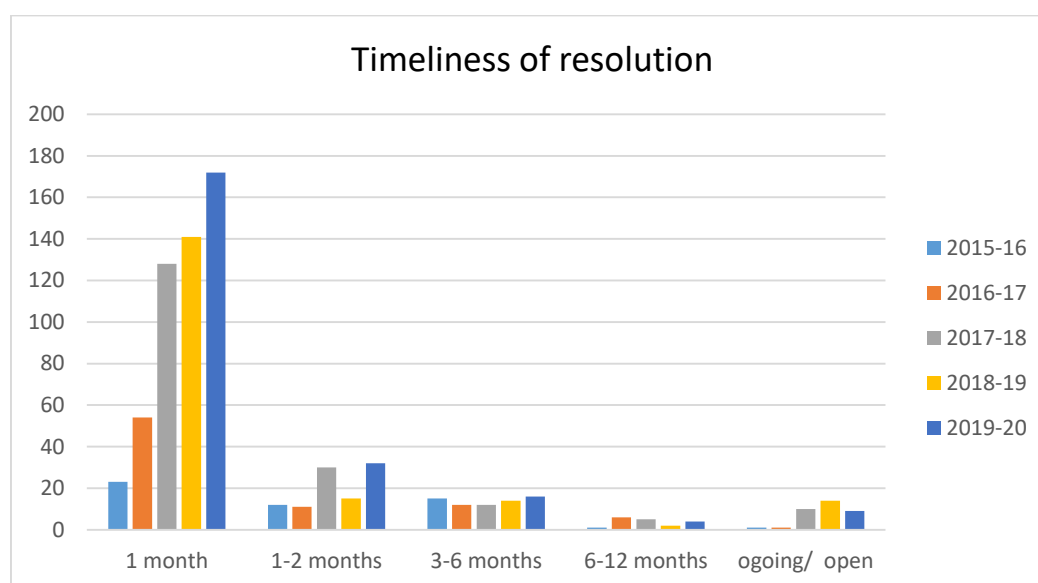
- 80% of Designated Officer cases are resolved within one month
- 90% within three months

- 10.3 Allegations are resolved in a timely manner with 173 (75%) of total cases being resolved in one month and this is consistent with the previous year's performance data. Resolution timescales can be impeded by the complexity of cases involving ongoing criminal investigations and internal investigations where the employee has declared themselves unfit for work therefore delaying disciplinary action.
- 10.4 A total of 88% of cases were resolved within 3 months and 94% within 6 months. There were a further 2% that concluded after 6 months. The remaining cases were ongoing and not finalised at the end of this reporting period, this is predominantly involving ongoing complex cases and criminal or internal

investigations. At the time of writing the report a total of 9 (4%) of cases were still active.

- 10.5 The Designated Officer tracks all open cases on a 4 weekly basis to ensure that updates on outcomes of investigations are received and to enable cases to be closed in a timely manner. However, it should be noted once Police are involved or a case is referred to an employer for disciplinary procedures to be followed, the Designated Officer is reliant on external process which impact on resolution timescales.

Chart 8



11.0 Freedom of Information Requests

- 11.1 During 2019/20 the Designated Officer service has continued to take the lead with regards to Freedom of Information Requests with regards to allegations made about employees or volunteers working with children. Over the year 2 requests were received.

12.0 Service Improvements & Developments 2019/20

- 12.1 See Appendix 1.

13.0 Designated Officer Service Priorities and Plan 2020/21

- 13.1 In 2020/21 the Designated Officer Service plans to continue to promote awareness of the service across a range of professions to ensure that appropriate referrals are coming in and to break down any barriers to agencies seeking the advice and support of the Designated Officer Service. The role of the Designated Officer and the responsibilities of employers are included in multi-agency safeguarding training.

- 13.2 Discussions about the future of the Designated Officer service in Darlington will continue and a decision will be made as to where the service will be placed within the Local Authority.
- 13.3 The service also wants to improve the quality of the performance information gathered and to maximise the efficiency of the service using electronic recording systems. It is anticipated that in 2020/21 the recording of referrals to the Designated Officer service will be integrated within the casework system Liquid Logic. This will enable Children's Services to improve data matching where appropriate.
- 13.4 The Designated Officer Service will continue to be crucial to frontline practice to safeguard children in Darlington.
- 13.5 The Designated Officer will continue to monitor the incidence of allegations resulting from the use of restraint in education settings.
- 13.6 In 2020/21 the Designated Officer service has identified 4 key priorities (Appendix 2) which are pivotal to the on-going development of the service.

14.0 Recommendations

- 14.1 To note the contents of the report and the work undertaken during 2019/20 and to acknowledge the priorities of the Designated Officer service for 2020/21.
- 14.2 To share the Annual report with Darlington Safeguarding Partnership and Members who will be asked to:
- agree this Annual Report
 - to consider how they will continue to promote the role of the DO within their own organisation.

15.0 References

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018
- Guidance for staff facing an allegation 2014

16.0 Author

Marian Garland
Designated Officer
Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Business Unit
Date: 21st May 2020

Appendix 1**Service Improvements & Developments 2019/20**

A number of actions were identified for development of the Designated Officer function during 2019/20 which would further improve the performance of the service. The progress against these actions is highlighted below.

	Action	Lead	Timescale	Update
1	To ensure the induction of a newly appointed DO is successful and the appointee is retained	AD	Jan 2020	This is ongoing- Discussions about the future of the Designated Officer service in Darlington will continue in 2020 and a decision will be made as to where the service will be placed within the Local Authority.
2	DO will continue to raise awareness of the DO role via a range of media throughout the coming year	DO	Completed	All relevant information re the DO service has been posted on the revised Darlington Safeguarding Partnership website (July 2019). Websites and literature to have the name and contact details of the DO. All agencies will have correct details of DO. DO information will be easily accessible and relevant referrals made.
3	DO will continue to engage with the Safeguarding Multi Agency Trainer and Safeguarding Education Officer in relation to continual roll out of designated training	DO	March 2019	This is an on-going process.
4	DO to liaise with Police in relation to any historical allegations that may come as a result of the Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.	DO	Ongoing	The DO has an agreed strategy in place referring any notifications of historical sexual abuse from the Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Referrals from IICSA have been received via the NSPCC.
5	The DO will continue to maintain accurate records of referrals, decision making and outcomes; monitor date	DO	Ongoing	Records are reviewed monthly to ensure that they are accurate and up to date. Themes in relation to the use of restraint in schools for SEN pupils were

	and identify any themes that emerge and feed these themes into training			identified in 2019/20 and have been escalated to the Head of Education
6	DO to attend all pre-agreed regional DO meetings to ensure that Darlington's views and opinions are represented. DO to attend National Annual DO Conference.	DO	Ongoing	The DO attends quarterly regional DO meetings or receives an update by e mail. The DO attended the 2019 National DO Conference. All information from Conference was shared via email.
7	DO will continue to develop recording practice with system developments for future reports	DO	Ongoing	This was a priority for 2019/20. The DO has liaised with the Liquid Logic (LL) team and devised an appropriate recording system within LL and it is anticipated that recording be integrated within Liquid Logic in 2020.
8	To develop a safer recruitment guidance to offer further support and guidance to settings	DO and HR	Completed	The Safe Recruitment guidance is available on Darlington Borough Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy.
9	Review the format of DO initial evaluation meetings template for inclusion in Liquid Logic.	DO and LL	March 2020	The DO has liaised with the LL team and has devised a form for inclusion within the LL recording system. This is ongoing. The IEM from has been updated (July 2019)
10	The DO will provide feedback on National DO standards and seek approval from DSP and legal Services	DO	Ongoing	The National Standards are not yet completed. There is an on-going discussion as to whether a National Guidance will be appropriate for such a wide diversity of Local Authorities.
11	The DO will review and up-date the procedure for Managing Allegations and concerns against staff, carers or volunteers and seek approval via the DSCB Practice and Development and Procedures sub-group.	DO	Completed	The procedures were reviewed in July 2019 within the framework of the DSP Learning and Development sub-group, the procedures have been updated to reflect the changes to legislation – Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
12	To review and up-date the guidance for staff facing an allegation	DO	Completed	This guidance was reviewed in July 2019 within the framework of the DSP Learning and Development sub-group but will be kept under review.

Appendix 2

Designated Officer Service Priority Plan 2020/21

Priority 1. The future of the Designated Officer service in Darlington to be agreed and a decision made as to where the service will be placed within the Local Authority.

Action	Planned outcome	Lead	Timescale
A decision to be made as to where the Designated Officer would be best placed within the Local Authority with regards to workload and taking into consideration resilience for abstraction.	A decision regarding where the DO role should be placed.	Assistant Director	September 2020

Priority 2: DO database/recording to be integrated within Liquid Logic

Action	Planned Outcome	Lead	Timescale
In conjunction with the Liquid Logic team devise an appropriate DO casework recording system within Liquid Logic.	Improved recording and enhanced searching capacity for the DO and improved data matching for Children's Services where appropriate. Performance Indicators to be available on Liquid Logic which will feed figures into the DO Annual report.	DO/LL	September 2020

Priority 3: To monitor and address the prevalence of allegations involving the use of restraint in SEN Education settings in Darlington

Action	Planned Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Monitor the rate of allegations involving the use of restraint in SEN education settings in Darlington in respect of repeat allegations.	To work with Head Teachers and Safeguarding Leads to ensure that the DO is informed when such an allegation is made by a pupil/parent and that staff are using restraint appropriately and that any breaches of restraint	DO	March 2021

	guidelines are dealt with appropriately schools with a view to reducing the annual number of allegations of restraint within this category.		
--	---	--	--

Priority 4 Training and Awareness Raising in respect of the Designated Officer role and local procedures.

Action	Planned Outcome	Lead	Timescale
DO will continue to engage with the Safeguarding Multi Agency Trainer and Safeguarding Education Officer in relation to continual roll out of designated training and will hold awareness raising sessions with employers as requested.	Increased awareness amongst employers of the DO procedures and their responsibilities in reporting allegations to the DO and improved transparency in reporting allegations. This will potentially increase the number of referrals to the DO service and will improve safeguarding outcomes for children.	DO	March 2021

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 September 2020

LEARNING & SKILLS ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with an update on the performance of the Learning & Skills Service for academic year 2019/20.

Summary

2. The Learning & Skills service continues to perform well with a 'Good' Ofsted grade whilst supporting some of the most vulnerable adults, young people and families in Darlington.
3. The shift of provision to better align with local priorities has had some impact on the performance of the service due to the change in demographic of the learners. The service has recognised this and is putting in place further checks and controls to ensure that the service continues to perform at a high level.
4. There will be some challenges in 2020/21 as we move towards TVCA priorities as part of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget and the ongoing challenges of apprenticeship funding.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report

Reasons

6. To give Scrutiny Members oversight and knowledge of this externally funded service.

Suzanne Joyner
Director of Children and Adult Services

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Paul Richardson, Head of Skills and Employability - Extension 6015

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Council's Crime and Disorder responsibilities, young people engaged in learning are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour
Health and Well Being	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents
Sustainability	This report supports the Council's sustainability responsibilities
Diversity	This report supports the promotion of diversity
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes
Efficiency	Scrutiny of performance is integral to optimising outcomes.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report may have an impact on their education and future employment.

MAIN REPORT

The Learning & Skills Service

The Learning & Skills Service is the external training arm of the Council and is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) to provide learning and skills provision for the local community. The service has been an Ofsted 'Good' provider since 2004.

The service provides a range of training from Pre-entry Level to Level 5, including:

- 16-18 study programme and diploma courses
- Adult education, including basic skills such as English, maths and ICT
- Community Learning, including employability
- Family Learning
- Intensive Support
- Distance Learning
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Apprenticeships
- 14-16 alternative education

Learning & Skills supports some of the most disadvantaged adults, young people and families in Darlington and contributes to the priorities of both the Children and Young People's Plan and the sustainable community strategy; One Darlington: Perfectly Placed. Often the provision delivered provides a stepping stone to those taking their first steps back into learning and a number of past learners have moved on to higher level learning at Darlington College or other providers.

Teaching takes places across three main sites; the Coleridge Centre, Tubwell Row and the units at Lingfield Way, as well as in a number of school and community settings.

Apprenticeship provision includes Health and Social Care, Business Administration, Motor Vehicle, Site Joinery and Leadership and Management.

Learner Numbers - In 2019/20, as at 4 June 2020 the service had supported 813 learners across a wide range of programmes, including:

- 54 16-18 year olds
- 728 people on adult and community learning
- 31 apprentice starts
- A small number of 14-16 year olds on alternative provision

Funding - The overall funding allocation from the ESFA and TVCA for the Learning & Skills Service in 2019/20 was £707,658. This was split as follows:

- £183,901 - 16-18 Study Programme (ESFA)
- £442,710 – Adult Education (TVCA)
- £53,406 – Adult Education (ESFA)
- £3,000 – Apprenticeships (ESFA residual contract)
- £24,641 - Adult Learning Loans (ESFA)

In addition, the service draws down funding for delivering apprenticeships. To date, in 2019/20 this has amounted to £197,909.

Adult Education Devolution – From the start of academic year 2019/20 part of the Adult Education Budget was devolved to the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), this funding supports adult learning provision for Tees Valley residents. The service's allocation for 2019/20 was similar to what it received previously from the ESFA, the service has also received a small allocation from the ESFA to support non Tees Valley learners.

Apprenticeship Levy – The Learning & Skills service supports the Council to deliver the apprenticeship levy and offers a range of apprenticeship provision to meet the training needs of Council staff and other large employers.

Non-Levy Apprenticeship provision – The service also delivers apprenticeship training to SMEs who are not subject to the apprenticeship levy. This is delivered through a sub-contract on behalf of Middlesbrough Council who are the prime provider. The service aims to bid for its own non-levy allocation at the next opportunity.

Qualification Levels in Darlington - It should be noted that national data from NOMIS shows that whilst Darlington residents are better qualified than the North East average for Level 1-3 that is not the case for Level 4 which is 0.5% below the North East average. Darlington remains below the national average at almost every level. However, the percentage of residents with no qualifications (6.6%) is 1.1% better than the national average of 7.7% and 2.4% better than in 2018. An important contributor to this is the first steps and basic skills provision provided by the service.

Qualifications (Jan 2019-Dec 2019)

	Darlington	North East	Great Britain
	(%)	(%)	(%)
NVQ4 And Above	31.4	31.9	40.3
NVQ3 And Above	53.2	52.1	58.5
NVQ2 And Above	74.6	73.5	75.6
NVQ1 And Above	87.0	84.8	85.6
Other Qualifications	6.4	5.9	6.7
No Qualifications	6.6	9.4	7.7

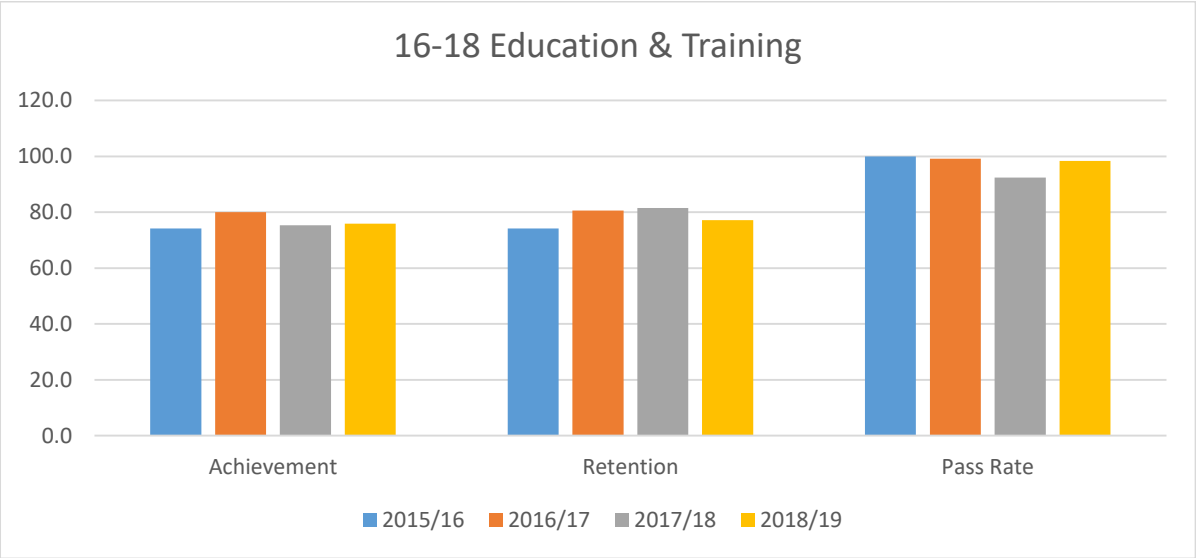
Performance

2018/19 Achievement Rates - The table below shows the 2018/19 achievement rate by provision type compared with the national benchmark. A further breakdown is given in the tables below. Due to Covid-19 no national data will be published for 2019/20.

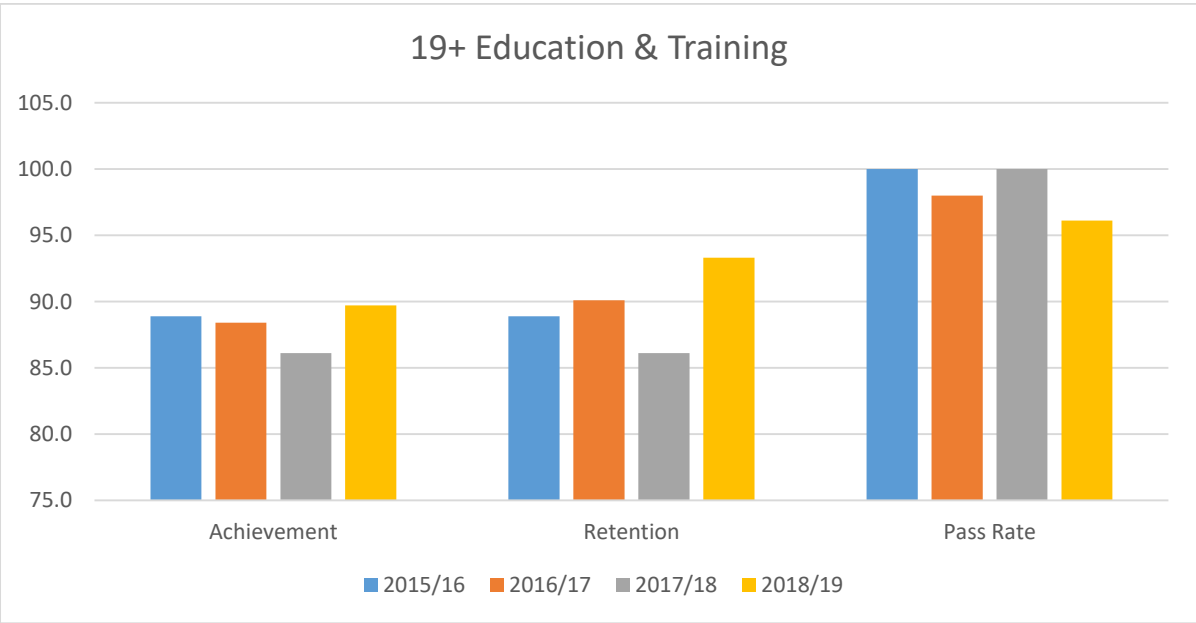
Provision Type	Learning & Skills Overall Achievement Rate	National Provider Type Overall Achievement Rate
16-18	75.9%	82.1%
Adult Education	89.7%	87.2%
Community Learning	98.7%	No comparator
Apprenticeships	76.8%	72.7%

The achievement rate percentage is calculated by multiplying the retention rate (the percentage of learners who completed their course) by the pass rate (the percentage of learners who completed the course and passed).

The 16-18 retention rate dropped between 2017/18 and 2018/19 however the pass rate rose amongst those learners that were retained resulting in a slight increase to the overall achievement rate. Please note that due to the decline in the number of providers in Darlington supporting the vulnerable 16-18 year olds there are now only two main providers Darlington Borough Council and Darlington College. The service often enrolls young people who have left college, for whatever reason, or do not feel able to cope in a large college setting.



The pass rate for 19+ education and training continues to remain high, even though the service has increased delivery of basic skills provision (English, maths and ICT) and ESOL in line with TVCA priorities. This has had a slight impact on the pass rate, although retention has improved following a dip in 2017/18.



In 2018/19 the apprenticeship achievement rate stood at 76.8%, down from 82.4% in 2017/18 this was largely due to a move from apprenticeship frameworks to standards, this was a national trend. The Service's achievement rate remains well above the national average of 72.7% and the service continues to have a good reputation with employers.







Learner Satisfaction - All learners are encouraged to complete a learner satisfaction and in 2018/19, 91.62% of learners rated the service as 'Good' or above

Learner Progression - Learners are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. A high proportion of learners progress to further/higher education, employment or training at a level suitable to meet appropriate career plans. In 2018/19:

- 93% of Apprenticeship leavers progressed to FE, employment, Advanced Apprenticeships or university
- 70% of Study Programme learners progressed to FE, Apprenticeships or employment
- 85% of Adult Learners sampled progressed to further learning or employment






Overall, the Service delivers considerable added value to both individual learners, the Council and other agencies. The diagram below demonstrates the additional benefits the service brings.

Impact of Learning & Skills

 Improved adult skills, literacy & numeracy	 Greater community engagement	 Enhanced workforce development inc. CPD, bespoke training and Apprenticeships	 Better parenting skills, resilience and independence	 Increased participation of young people and adults	 More volunteering, peer support and community integration
---	---	--	---	---	--

Learning & Skills Provision

14-16 Alternative Education	16-18 Education & Training	Apprenticeships	Adult Learning	Community Learning	Family Learning	Intensive Support	Access to HE
-----------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------	----------------	--------------------	-----------------	-------------------	--------------

 Fewer skills gaps	 Less isolation of vulnerable groups. e.g. refugees, elderly residents and those with learning difficulties & disabilities	 Lower cost of staff development at a high quality and bespoke to DBC	 Less dependency on services. e.g. domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and homelessness	 Fewer number of young people and adults who are not economically active. Reduced cost of NEETs. Less anti-social behaviour.
--	---	---	--	--

Challenges

Covid-19 – The Service made a very successful transition to online learning at the start of lockdown using Google Classroom and both staff and learners have responded positively. There have already been a number of fully online courses which started during lockdown. In line with ESFA guidance the expectation is that all further education provision will fully restart from September 2020. For Learning & Skills, and the majority of other providers, this is likely to be a mix of online and classroom based learning. The challenge will be to maintain learner numbers going forward and supporting those that are digitally excluded.

Devolution - The Adult Education makes up a significant percentage of the service's income and devolution of that funding to TVCA will present a new challenge. In the first year (2019/20) we saw little change but beyond that the expectation is that the provision will be more aligned with the skills needs of the Tees Valley, this includes first steps provision. The service has already moved in this direction with a shift from leisure type courses to more basic skills provision and will continue to ensure it is responding to TVCA priorities whilst continuing to meet the needs of Darlington residents. This has meant moving some of the learning for leisure type provision to full cost or supporting the establishment of learning groups.

Apprenticeships - The introduction of the Apprenticeship levy continues to present some challenges with the money moving from training providers to employers and nationally apprenticeship numbers have fallen as large employers had attempted to manage their levy spend. However, the service continues to work with employers to encourage apprenticeship take up and is looking to further grow the provision.

Study Programme – It is expected that the number of young people not in employment will rise over the next few years and the current premises at Tubwell Row is almost at capacity therefore the Service is seeking to move to larger premises to meet the expected demand.

Ofsted – The Service is currently due an Ofsted inspection and the impact of Covid-19 has meant that less time has been spent on inspection preparations. However, it is hoped that the Service will be able to retain its Good grading.

This page is intentionally left blank

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

WORK PROGRAMME

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2020/21 Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included.

Summary

2. Members are requested to consider the attached draft work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the remainder of the Municipal Year which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and recommendations previously agreed by this Scrutiny Committee in the last Municipal Year.
3. Any additional areas of work which Members wish to add to the agreed work programme will require the completion of a quad of aims in accordance with the previously approved procedure.

Recommendations

4. Members are requested to note the work programme and consider any additional items which they may wish to include.

**Paul Wildsmith
Managing Director**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Author: Allison Hill

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
Carbon Impact	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the eight outcomes.
Efficiency	The Work Programmes are integral to scrutinising and monitoring services efficiently (and effectively), however this report does not identify specific efficiency savings.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. The format of the proposed work programme has been reviewed to enable Members of this Scrutiny Committee to provide a rigorous and informed challenge to the areas for discussion.
6. Each topic links to the outcomes and the conditions in the Sustainable Community Strategy – One Darlington Perfectly Placed:-

<p>SCS Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Children with the best start in lifeb) More businesses more jobsc) A safe and caring communityd) More people caring for our environmente) More people active and involvedf) Enough support for people when neededg) More people healthy and independenth) A place designed to thrive	<p>Three Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Build strong communitiesb) Grow the economyc) Spend every pound wisely
---	--

7. In addition, each topic links to performance indicators from the Performance Management Framework (PMF) to provide robust and accurate data for Members to use when considering topics and the work they wish to undertake. There are some topics where appropriate PMF indicators have not yet been identified however; these can be added as the work programme for each topic is developed.

Forward Plan and Additional Items

8. Any Member seeking to add a new item to the work programme will need to complete a quad of aims.
9. A copy of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 2** for information.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 1

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Performance Management and Regulation	Q4/year end 7 Sept 2020 Q1 2 November 2020 Q2 4 Jan 2021 Q3 12 April 2021	Sharon Raine	Children with the best start in life A safe and caring community Enough support for people when needed More people healthy and independent	Build strong communities Spend every pound wisely	Agreed set of indicators	To receive quarterly monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary
Learning and Skills Service Annual Report	7 September 2020	Paul Richardson	Enough support for people when needed			Annual Report to demonstrate challenge
Children and Young People and Public Health – Post Covid-19 Priorities	7 September 2020	Ken Ross	Children with the best start in life A safe and caring community Enough support for people when needed	Build Strong Communities	PBH 009 PBH 013c PBH 016 PBH 018 PBH 020 PBH 021 PBH 054	Annual monitoring - Children and Young People's Profile, Healthy Lifestyle Survey, Childhood Healthy Weight Action Plan 2017-2022 and

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
			More people healthy and independent			Oral Health Plan 2017-2022
IRO Annual Report	7 September 2020	Jane Kochanowski	Children with the best start in life		CSC201	To examine the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer for Looked After Children
Local Designated Officer Annual Report	7 September 2020	James Stroyan/ Amanda Hugill	A safe and caring community			To examine the Annual Report and assure Members that allegations made against staff who work with children are reported and how they are actioned
Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report	2 November 2020	Amanda Hugill/ Ann Baxter, Independent Chair	A safe and caring community	Build strong communities	LSCB Annual Report	Annually monitoring
Academy Trusts	2 November 2020	Presentation by Katherine Cowell, the Interim Regional Schools Commissioner for the North of England	Children with the best start in life			To examine safeguarding measures and health and safety training in place within the boroughs Academies and

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
						attainment within Academy Trusts.
2020/21 Childcare Sufficiency Review	4 January 2021	Tony Murphy/ Nicola Davies	Children with the best start in life A safe and caring community Enough support for people when needed	Build strong communities		To provide an annual report to elected Members on how the authority meets its duty to secure sufficient childcare places.
Children and Young People Plan 2017-22	4 January 2021	Christine Shields	Children with the best start in life			Annual Update to Members
Private Children's Homes and Planning Guidance	TBA					Following an update to the Scrutiny meeting on 11 March 2019 Members agreed to monitor the number of private children's homes in the borough.
JOINT REVIEW WITH HEALTH AND HOUSING AND ADULTS SCRUTINY:						
Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Autism Provision Review Group	Scoping Meeting held on 2 March 2020	Christine Shields	Enough support for people when needed			To review the provisions and services and contractual arrangements between this Council and our providers who provide the Autism provisions, diagnoses and support services for Darlington.
REVIEW OF ADOPTIVE SERVICES						
Adoptive Services	Approved by Scrutiny at their meeting held on 29 June 2020					To examine how the Regional Adoption Agency is serving Darlington and to examine how the Coronavirus Pandemic has affected adoption

ARCHIVED ITEMS

Looked After Children Missing From Care	2 July 2018	Alison Poulter / Chris Bell	Enough support for people when needed			To examine the reasons why children in care go missing and the interventions in place to avoid episodes and examine partnership working and parent engagement
LAC Missing from Care – Reasons and Interventions	10 September 2018	Joanne Stoddart	Children with the best start in life Enough support for people when needed		CSC246	To examine the reasons why children in care go missing and the interventions in place to avoid. To invite the Police Liaison Officer to attend Scrutiny to discuss
Educational Landscape	Archived on 3 Oct 2018	Tony Murphy	Children with the best start in life	Build Strong Communities	CSC 044 Basket of LAIT KS1, KS2, GCSE & A Level indicators. Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT) academic year 2014/15/	To examine school improvement including the decline in performance for maths and English and what action is being taking to address this.

					Ofsted Sept 2014/ Department for Education (DFE) performance data	
Stability of Places for Looked After Children	10 December 2018	Joanne Stoddart	Children with the best start in life Enough support for people when needed	Build strong communities	CSC 228 CSC 229	To monitor annually the stability of places for Looked After Children. To be monitored via the regular performance reports in future
Children Services Accessibility Strategy	10 December 2018		Children with the best start in life Enough support for people when needed			To give Scrutiny Members the opportunity to consider the Strategy prior to Cabinet.
SEND High Needs Review:		Tony Murphy	Children with the best start in life			To give Scrutiny Members the opportunity to consider 3 of the 4 core elements of the Review.
Strategy and Funding	29 October 2018 10 Dec 2018		More People healthy and independent			Members to carry out a T/F Review on the proposals.
Home to School Transport	29 October 2018		Enough support for people when needed			Verbal update to Members

SEND Strategy and Funding Consultation Review Group	10 December 2018		Children with the best start in life			To give a Scrutiny response to the consultation on the SEND Strategy and Funding and SEND Travel Assistance Policy
Childhood Obesity/ Oral Health/Mental Health Links	<p>Review suspended –to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Childhood Healthy Weight Plan.</p> <p>Update report on the Childhood Healthy Weight Plan to Scrutiny on 3 February 2020.</p>		<p>Children with the best start in life</p> <p>Enough support for people when needed</p> <p>More People Healthy and Independent</p>	Build Strong Communities		To investigate the high incidence of childhood obesity in Darlington and the associated links to poor dental health; and whether the desire to promote good 'self image' has an impact on mental health issues in young people.
Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24	Special Meeting 13 January 2020	Elizabeth Davison	One Darlington Perfectly Placed	Spend Every Pound Wisely		To consider the Medium Term Financial Plan in relation to the areas within this Scrutiny's remit

Council Plan 2020/23	Special Meeting on 13 January 2020	Paul Wildsmith				To consider the Council Plan
Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Update	3 February 2020	Christine Shields				Update report on the community based initiatives funded from Voluntary Sector Development Fund monies, piloted during 2019/20.
Home to School Transport	3 February 2020	Tony Murphy/ Graham Easterlow				To update Members on the current position/ changes to regulations which may impact on the MTFP
Extension of Funding to 21 for Children in Foster Care	March 2020	Jane Kochanowski	Children with the best start in life A safe and caring community Enough support for people when needed	Build strong communities		Annual monitoring – a duty on Local Authorities to facilitate, monitor and support staying put arrangements. Now monitored by quarterly performance reports.

			More people healthy and independent			
--	--	--	-------------------------------------	--	--	--

This page is intentionally left blank

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Complaints Made to Local Government Ombudsman	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Treasury Management Annual and Outturn Prudential Indicators 2019/20	Council 24 Sep 2020 Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Reports 2019/20	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Annual Review of the Investment Fund	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Faverdale Masterplan Report	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Darlington Borough Local Plan – Local Development Scheme	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Redevelopment of the Victorian Indoor Market	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Proposed Write-Off of Irrecoverable Debts 2019-20	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Exchange of Land at Whessoe Road and Drinkfield Marsh, Darlington	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Delivery of New Homes at Neasham Road - Joint Venture Proposal and Land Disposal	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Construction of Hybrid Business Innovation Centre - Central Park	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Schedule of Transactions	Cabinet 15 Sep 2020
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 10 Nov 2020
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 10 Nov 2020
Council Tax Support - Scheme Approval 2021/22	Cabinet 10 Nov 2020
Skerneham Masterplan Report	Cabinet 10 Nov 2020
Rail Heritage Quarter Tenant Leases and Stockton and Darlington Railway Walking and Cycling Route	Cabinet 10 Nov 2020
Annual Procurement Plan 2020/21 - Update	Cabinet 10 Nov 2020
School Term Dates 2022/2023	Cabinet 8 Dec 2020

Climate Change Cross Party Working Group - Update	Cabinet 8 Dec 2020
Mid-Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management 2020/21	Cabinet 8 Dec 2020
Annual Audit Letter	Cabinet 8 Dec 2020
School Place Planning	Cabinet